INDIRA GANDHI
SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT

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Editor

SURENDRA MISHRA
Secretary-General, Lok Sabha

Published for

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

By

JAINCO ART INDIA
1/21, Sarva Priya Vihar
New Delhi – 110016 (India)

First Published 1996
©1996, Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi
Cover photograph by courtesy of Dr. Swraj Paul

Published under Rule 382 of the Rules of Procedure and
Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha (Eighth Edition)

Published for Lok Sabha Secretariat by:
Sudhir Kumar Jain
Jainco Art India
1/21, Sarva Priya Vihar
New Delhi – 110016 (India)

अध्यक्ष लोक सभा

SPEAKER LOK SABHA

FOREWORD

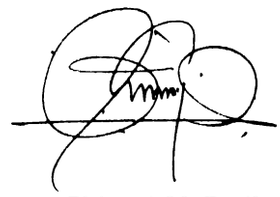
A multi-faceted personality, Smt. Indira Gandhi symbolized the spirit of India and steered the nation at a time when it was beset with many short-term and long-term crises of nation-state building. She was an epitome of unwavering courage, confidence, determination and dedication which laid the solid foundations of the stability, growth and development of Indian society and polity.

Nurtured in the background of the freedom movement, she discovered India and had glimpses of the world civilization under the erudite scholarship of her father, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, a man of enormous intellect and exceptional wisdom. She learnt the values of Truth and Ahimsa from Mahatma Gandhi and from Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, she learnt the aesthetics of life and nature. Yet, her thought structure developed an originality for itself, which helped her to become an institution in herself in the post independence history of India.

With her philosophical and ideological orientation, Smt. Gandhi gave a strong welfare bias to the Indian economic framework which came to be reflected in her idea of 'arthik swaraj' for the people of India. For infrastructural development, she rightly underlined the importance of research and development in the twin fields of science and technology. Her contributions in Parliament covered an entire range of subjects of national and international importance. Many landmark measures for securing social justice were initiated and implemented. She abolished the privy purses; and nationalised the banks. The MRTP Act was enacted to regulate the activities of big companies; and above all, she put emphasis on land reforms. It was because of her firm commitment to social justice that the Directive Principles of State Policy were sought to be given precedence over the Fundamental Rights. She held the Constitution not as a static document, but as an important instrument of social change and a symbol of people's faith.

Smt. Gandhi served both the Houses of Parliament and made excellent contributions to parliamentary deliberations. "Parliament" she once said in the Lok Sabha, "is a repository of the hopes and wishes of the people". She revealed her genuine democratic spirit while participating in parliamentary debates, which occasionally invited strong opposition and interventions. But the spirit of decency and decorum always prevailed even in most acrimonious of debates. I am glad that the Lok Sabha Secretariat has thoughtfully recapitulated in the present Volume, the contribution of Indiraji to the enrichment of parliamentary debates and nation-building.

I am sure this book which documents the myriad aspects of Smt. Indira Gandhi's personality will prove to be of great interest to parliamentarians, research scholars and others interested in the working of Indian Parliament and polity.



New Delhi
January, 1996

Shivraj V. Patil

PREFACE

Born and brought up in the background of the freedom movement, *Bharat Ratna* Smt. Indira Gandhi played a very important role in our national life. In the pre-independence period, she actively participated in the freedom struggle and suffered imprisonment. After independence, she helped in shaping the course of national politics for about two decades and emerged as an indomitable symbol of India's self-respect and national identity. As the Prime Minister of India for over sixteen years, she exuded breadth of vision, sureness of touch in deciding what was right for India in the long run, and a flawless sense of timing in implementing the decisions. Her firm determination and tireless efforts to ameliorate the conditions of the weaker sections, eradicate poverty and remove socio-economic inequalities endeared her to the masses. She boldly grappled with the challenges of her times and was an unyielding champion, who overcame all adversities with an iron will. She was held in high esteem for her courageous actions based on sound convictions. She built a strong, vibrant and vigorous India on the foundations laid by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru and led the nation on the path of socialism, secularism, democracy and development.

In the international arena, she put India on a pedestal where its voice was listened to with affection in the developing world and with respect in the more powerful states. As an influential world leader, she contributed immensely towards maintaining and strengthening international peace and security and promoting prosperity of mankind.

In her death India lost a charismatic leader and statesman. She left behind a fragrant memory of sacrifice and service which would continue to enliven the path of the present and future generations.

The present work is a humble tribute to Smt. Indira Gandhi for her outstanding services to our parliamentary polity. It seeks to focus on her invaluable contributions to the debates in both the Houses of Parliament as also to the process of nation-state building. In spite of the sea change that is taking place all around us, her ideas and ideals would continue to inspire us in the quest for a better India. Hence the relevance of this publication.

The book is divided into two Parts. Part I contains a Profile of Smt. Indira Gandhi which gives glimpses of her eventful life and achievements.

Part II titled "Speeches in Parliament" contains about 245 Speeches and Statements made by her in both the Houses of Parliament during her long parliamentary career, as a member, as a Minister and as the Prime Minister. These speeches cover the whole gamut of social, economic and political issues of those times. The India of 1960s, 1970s as well as of 1980s has found reflection in these speeches.

The speeches are indicative of Smt. Gandhi's firm faith in democracy, her desire to ensure equality of opportunity for all, her respect for colleagues, concern about the fissiparous tendencies among some sections of our society, her urge for ensuring a better life for mankind, and her dream to cultivate a feeling of fraternity among the developing and developed nations. The speeches are also notable for their refreshing originality as they reflect a spontaneous flow of thoughts, reactions and responses during the debates in Parliament. They reveal many unknown facets of Smt. Gandhi's personality which would otherwise have remained hidden. Her wit, wisdom, dedication, sincerity, commitment, tolerance, affection towards the masses and other such qualities can be found in these speeches. They also bring out her irresistible charm, incisive intellect and the captivating style of speaking.

The speeches have been arranged under twelve broad subject-headings or Sections. All the speeches delivered by Smt. Indira Gandhi while replying to the debates on the Motions thanking the President for his Addresses to Parliament have been placed under the Section 'National Policy Framework'. All her speeches in reply to the Motions of No-Confidence in the Council of Ministers have been brought together under the Section 'No-Confidence Motions'. Other speeches have been arranged under ten Sections, keeping in view the dominant theme of each speech.

The speeches in each Section have been arranged chronologically except in Section 9 titled 'India and the World' and Section 11 titled 'Personalities'. In these two Sections, the speeches relating to one subject have been brought together to facilitate systematic study and reference. Efforts have been made to include in this Volume, all the main speeches of Smt. Indira Gandhi in Parliament, leaving out only small statements, interventions and obituary references made by her. The speeches have been suitably edited. On many occasions, she had spoken in Hindi. Free translations of these speeches have been incorporated. As such, the speeches published in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha debates should be treated as authentic.

We are deeply beholden to Shri Shivraj V. Patil, Hon'ble Speaker of Lok Sabha for the initiative he took for this publication and also for his inspiration and guidance at every stage for bringing out this book and also for giving a valuable Foreword.

We are immensely grateful to Shri K. Natwar Singh, a former Union Minister of State, an eminent parliamentarian and a close associate of Smt. Indira Gandhi, for

penning down in his inimitable style, a very perceptive profile of Smt. Gandhi for this Volume. In a few pages he has captured the essence of her charming personality.

Dr. R.C. Bhardwaj, my predecessor, provided able leadership and direction to our officers and staff and personally devoted considerable time and energy for the early completion of this project. We are indeed indebted to him.

I must also express my deep appreciation for the hard work done by Smt. Reva Nayyar, Joint Secretary, Shri John Joseph, Director, Library and Reference, Research, Documentation and Information Service, Shri R.C. Ahuja, Joint Director, Smt. Kalpana Sharma and Smt. Kanta Pandit, Assistant Directors, Shri A.K. Singh and Shri Sanjay Kumar, Research Assistants in bringing out this publication in record time.

Our thanks are also due to the Publishers of this book, M/s. Jainco Art India, who have brought it out in a very short time and have done a real good job.

We hope this Volume would be found useful by parliamentarians, academics, researchers and journalists as also by the general readers.

Surendra Mishra
Secretary-General
Lok Sabha

New Delhi
January, 1996

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Part I

PROFILE

Smt. Indira Gandhi

Indira Gandhi : A Profile

By
K. Natwar-Singh
Member, Eighth Lok Sabha
Union Minister of State – 1984-1989

Both Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Smt. Indira Gandhi, when they assumed office, had no administrative or parliamentary experience. In no time both mastered the art of government and at the same time became accomplished and formidable parliamentarians.

Smt. Indira Gandhi had been a Member of the Rajya Sabha for a few months and Minister of Information and Broadcasting in Shastriji's Government. It was only after assuming office in 1966 and becoming a Member of the Lok Sabha that the country became aware of her administrative and parliamentary gifts. It was said she was initially uncomfortable in the Lok Sabha. She soon proved everyone wrong. She learnt rapidly, becoming a consummate parliamentarian. She dominated the House and provided it some of its most memorable and ecstatic moments. She thrilled Parliament in December 1971.

All too often, Smt. Indira Gandhi is depicted as formal, forbidding, solemn, severe and silent. What is seldom mentioned is that this charismatic, beautiful, sparkling human being was a great lover of books, a voracious reader, a great humanist, with a wide range of non-political interests. She had exquisite taste, a distinctive style, uncommon elegance, charm and a great sense of humour.

Like her father, she was a lover of words and phrases. She took great pains over her speeches and invariably improved and enlivened drafts put up to her – a quotation here, a phrase there made all the difference. And humour too, as will become evident from reading the speeches included in this Volume.

A Prime Minister is the prime persuader. Indira Gandhi proved this time and again. What was her hold on the masses? It is no exaggeration to say that no other politician had been seen and heard by a larger number of human beings. She was in some extraordinary way able to identify herself with them. The people believed she cared for them. *Garibi Hatao* was not an empty slogan. It caught the imagination of the people.

Jawaharlal Nehru was a great letter writer. So was Indira Gandhi. Her correspondence was as voluminous as it was varied. Letter writing was a therapy for her. Letters abolished

distance. Broke barriers. Young and old, artists and authors, scientists and social workers, politicians and freedom fighters, children and teachers, from all over the world, wrote to her. She tried to reply to as many as she could. She was an inspired communicator and used both the spoken and written word to get her message across.

She was endowed with a fabulous memory. She personally knew a large number of Congress workers in every State of the Union. She remembered their names. Always asked after their children. Thus she had over the years built an independent national political base. Her appeal cut across religion, region, gender. The Syndicate in 1969 had organisational control, but could not match her political following.

Indira Gandhi had the gift for establishing immediate rapport with a wide range of people and make them feel comfortable. She could, when occasion demanded, be cold in a studied manner.

India and India's honour meant everything to her. No one got away with even the mildest slippage in that area. Her response would be steely and clear as some world leaders discovered to their discomfiture.

Her political achievements are too well known to be enumerated. Unlike her father, she did not have an easy political ride. Nor was she as fortunate as he was in his colleagues and critics. She fought and overcame formidable obstacles, inside the Congress party and outside.

Indira Gandhi was the first world leader to speak up on Environment – in 1972 at Stockholm. She carried forward her father's pioneering work in scientific, technological and space areas. Another equally great achievement was making India self-sufficient in food.

Even in the midst of a crisis she never lost her poise or balance. Out came an Ogden Nash poem, a quotation from Robert Frost, or "Alice-in-Wonderland'. She was in so many ways an original individual. She was an accomplished linguist, spoke French fluently. When questioned who her favourite person in history was, she answered – Adi Sankaracharya. One day I asked her to name one book she would like to have if marooned on a desert island. Without hesitation she said – the Oxford English Dictionary.

Indira Gandhi loved mountains and rivers, animals and birds. She could animatedly discuss ornithology with Salim Ali (whom she nominated to the Rajya Sabha), and education with Ivan Illich. With authors and writers, she felt at ease and personally knew several. Iris Murdoch, the British novelist, was at school with her – Badminton in England. Together they wrote a play – "A Very Mellow-Drama."

Her elegance and style were tempered with austerity. This was a legacy of the freedom movement. She disliked ostentation. I remember once bringing her a modest gift. She accepted with grace adding, "You know, Natwar, one can do without so much". A simple

yet complex comment. She hated waste, and waste of time above all. Herself, she packed 36 hours in 24.

If 1971 was a triumphant year for her, 1983 was a celebration. She presided over the NAM and Commonwealth Summits, both held in Delhi. Both Summits were near organisational miracles. Nothing went wrong because the Prime Minister took personal and daily interest in the run up to these two historic events. Here we saw the culmination of a life full of intense drama and spectacular grandeur.

The imposition of the Emergency was out of character. Left to herself, she would not have taken that extreme option. She atoned for it by announcing elections in January 1977. She lost. She suffered. She returned with a massive popular mandate in January 1980. The people of India are generous and fair-minded. Their wisdom, their understanding are the best hope for our democracy, which Indira Gandhi did much to sustain and strengthen.

She was snatched away when needed most. That day the spring went out of my life, but her memory endures and as do the soul-stirring, prophetic, fateful words she uttered a day before her assassination. She died standing on her feet. She obviously had a premonition about her death—

> "If I die a violent death as some fear and a few are plotting, I know the violence will be in the thought and the action of the assassin, not in my dying – for no hate is dark enough to overshadow the extent of my love for my people and my country; no force is strong enough to divert me from my purpose and my endeavour to take this country forward".

Here is greatness for you.

Part II

SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT

Smt. Indira Gandhi taking Oath of Office and Secrecy as Minister of Information and Broadcasting in the Union Cabinet on 2 July, 1964

Smt. Indira Gandhi at a meeting with the Leaders of the Opposition Parties at Parliament House on 15 March, 1967

Smt. Indira Gandhi at a meeting with some Members of Parliament at Parliament House on 27 July, 1983

Smt. Indira Gandhi with the President of France, Mr. Francois Mitterrand in New York on 29 September, 1983 during a visit to the United Nations

Smt. Indira Gandhi with the British Prime Minister, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher in New York on 30 September, 1983

Smt. Indira Gandhi addressing a Press Conference at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi, on 13 October, 1983

Smt. Indira Gandhi at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in New Delhi on 23 November, 1983

Smt. Indira Gandhi with the Heads of Government from other Commonwealth countries in New Delhi on 23 November, 1983

Smt. Indira Gandhi addressing Press Conference after conclusion of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting on 29 November, 1983

Smt. Indira Gandhi with the President, Shri Zail Singh and other dignitaries arriving at the Central Hall of Parliament House on the occasion of the President's Address to Parliament on 23 February, 1984

1

NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

Consensus and Cooperation for Nation - Building*

Madam Deputy Chairman, many Members have rightly talked about the recent elections. These elections have brought into focus a unique democratic experiment and we of the Congress are willing and even determined to see it through. The national consensus which used to be achieved within an all-embracing Congress is now being institutionalised, in Governments of various hues and persuasions which are attempting a working relationship with the Centre. In fact there is no other way in a federal India, and I think that there is health in this kind of political competition, which is at the base of all democratic activity. The very nature of this experiment demands from every Party a total devotion to common national tasks and objectives. These can be worked out in free and frank exchanges between the parties, for only then can we cement and enrich our unity. The Congress has always worked for unity and we will continue to do so. I think that any threats to subvert unity should be tackled with equal determination.

This raises the question of our functioning in the Legislatures and in Parliament. I believe that this is in the interest of all Parties. As I mentioned on a previous occasion, we are all of us, all the Parties which are represented in the House today, either the Ruling Party or Opposition. We all belong to both in some State or another.

*** *** ***

The Congress has always faced up to realities and it will continue to face up to them. It is in the interest of all Parties to work out a style of work which will not damage our democratic institutions, so that we do not spend our energy in making a mockery of these institutions and destroying the very fabric of the democratic structure.

*** *** ***

Those who refuse to grow within the constitutional boundaries of our Republic should be isolated and fought and I think the Congress will do so. But at the same time it will try its utmost to seek cooperation from all those who value our democratic structure and are willing to work within it.

*** *** ***

Life teaches many strange lessons. As I said just now , the situation has greatly changed. The Congress was once accused of being a multitude of different attitudes and views. Many

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *R.S. Deb.*, 27 March, 1967, cc. 807-20.

hon. Members used to speak of the need for polarisation, more precise thinking and position. Now, we find that the Congress is moving towards action-oriented policies, while it is the hon. Members opposite who are joining together in elections and in Governments, that is, Members holding different views, adhering to different policies, without any semblance of agreement on these policies. Communists, Swatantra Members and Jana Sanghis...

*** *** ***

I am glad you have pleasure in it.* We do not wish to deny you that pleasure, but it is not our concern. We have never felt so and I have said so not only during the elections but before the elections and after the elections, that our aim is not that only the Congress should do certain things but that certain things should be done. I have stated on behalf of the Central Government that we will fully cooperate with all those who are involved in solving our national problems. I think the nation awaits the formulation of a comprehensive policy to tackle these problems which have come to a head, not as some hon. Members have suggested, because of faulty policies. I do not deny that there may have been shortfalls and shortcomings and mistakes. At the same time, we cannot also deny the fact of the repeated aggression on our borders and the effect that it has had on the country's economy or of the effect of the unprecedented drought and the manner in which the monsoon has behaved. All hon. Members are fully aware that not only have the monsoons failed us repeatedly, but even the winter rains did not come at the right time. In fact they have come at a time when they could do and have done the maximum damage to standing crops. These are facts which cannot be denied. I think that the Congress is capable of forging a comprehensive policy and of implementing it with energy that perhaps an alliance of opposites cannot muster.

The President's Address has to be considered in this context and the items that it has mentioned have to be expanded into programmes. Weapons of implementation must also be forged at the same time. My only regret is that the debate, although it recognises the great change that has come about in the country, does not really attempt to meet that change. They talk about it but the debate goes on if I might so call it. on an emotional and generalised pitch. The problems we face demand close and detailed study. They cannot be solved by dogmatic assertions. In the coming months we hope that all of us together can involve ourselves and that especially hon. Members of the Opposition, will also attempt to involve themselves more fully in the totality of the problems and attempt to offer a more concrete solution. For our part, for my part, I have asked my Ministers to try and have meaningful dialogues with all those who are interested in tangible results rather than in securing debating points or headlines in the newspapers.

Now the problems are known. What we have to attempt is to achieve somekind to of broad consensus. The solutions suggested here differ considerably and it is not really possible to have any one solution. But we must try to achieve some kind of consensus and the greatest cooperation that is possible. I mentioned elections. We all realise and the President himself has said that they were a victory of democracy and victory of the people. I think we have to thank for this, the impartial and excellent organisation of the Election

* Replying to Shri Bhupesh Gupta who quipped, "To keep you out of power is a great pleasure".

Commissioner and this colleagues. Many remarks have been made about the Congressmen who have lost. Now, some people have always lost in every election. This time larger numbers of Congressmen have lost, but so have many leaders from Parties of the Opposition. I think the new generation which has grown to adulthood, wanted new faces and wherever they could find them, they have voted for them. I think this is the true strength of our system, *i.e.* to achieve change through peaceful democratic methods and so; therefore, while we miss our friends and comrades here that is, in the last Lok Sabha, we do welcome this process, because we feel that any other method would be disastrous to India. We have renounced violence and we feel that violence is a negation of democracy. I regret that we do have people in our country who still advocate violence sometimes. I have welcomed the formation of new Governments even those which have been formed by non–Congress Parties, and I have said and I mean to adhere to this that I respect the verdict of the people . While we are talking of the Congress Party, I think we cannot forget the fact that the Congress not only won independence but did give continuity and stability to the country at a time when these were essential. Therefore, Congress really helped democracy to take root. At the same time I am glad that peaceful alternatives are emerging and that the people are exercising their choice. Then I spoke on these issues earlier and pointed out certain dangers, it was not that there was danger in anybody else forming the ruling party but the danger in opportunist alliances which sometimes put small groups in a bargaining position. Therefore, it is our actions in Parliament and in the State Assemblies which will determine the course of future events. As I said, as far as the Centre is concerned, we have offered and we will continue to offer our whole hearted cooperation to the States. I am fully aware of the difficulties in the way because many of these difficulties were there before even when there were Congress Governments in all the States. We did have these difficulties, problems of State *versus* Centre or State *versus* State and at a time of economic difficulty or food shortage these difficulties are naturally accentuated and it may be that a coalition or non-Congress Government which is in power may think that certain attitudes are being taken merely because they happen to belong to another party. But I would like to as sure them that this is not at all. Where there is a difficulty the difficulty would be of such a nature as all States would have to face in any circumstance; that is because of the very critical situation in which the whole country finds itself today.

In all the States the changeover was smooth and speedy. There was one notable exception about which a great deal has been said in the House, and that is Rajasthan. The President himself expressed his distress over it and I also must say that we are not at all happy at what happened. I do not want to go into the details because the Home Minister has already given a comprehensive statement in both Houses of Parliament. I can only hope that there also the situation will be such that normal conditions and responsible Government can come into being soon.

The most serious problem before us today is that of the economic situation and it was natural that many hon. Members should touch on it. Here again both the diagnosis and the treatment suggested differed widely. Many Members,–I was here when the hon. Member, Shri Setalvad was speaking–spoke of the failure on the food front. But I have on a previous occasion spoken in this House regarding the herculean effort which was made

in dealing with drought relief. It was not a small problem and I think that perhaps hon. Members do not have a full idea of the terrible human tragedy which was averted because of the tremendous administrative and other organisational efforts made at that time, and I have earlier paid a tribute and I would like to do so again to the people of all these areas who helped in no small measure in dealing with this problem. The food situation remains acute. Earlier I talked about the rain. The present untimely winter rain has further complicated the situation, although it has brought some relief to another problem which is as acute as, if not more acute even than the food problem which is the problem of drinking water specially in Bihar and some parts of U.P. This is a serious problem not only for animals but also for human beings, and specially in the rocky areas of Palamau district and Mirzapur district we have tried to mobilise rigs from all over the country from the Oil and Natural Gas Commission, foreign countries, private agencies, from wherever we could get rigs we have tried to mobilise them, but even now we have not enough. We are shortly having a meeting of Chief Ministers to discuss the food problem and I have assured the Bihar and U.P. Governments that they will have our fullest co-operation. I hope myself to visit the affected areas as soon as possible.

Shri Setalvad referred to the Food Minister, Shri Jagjivan Ram. I was sorry to hear his observations because I thought that Shri Jagjivan Ram was rather suited to this portfolio. He has the requisite political status. He has had long administrative experience which can give the required push to the present programmes of food distribution and of increasing agricultural production. He is himself a man of the people and he comes from an area which has suffered in this drought. So he is personally aware of the problem and I think he understands farmers' and workers' problems better than many of us. Our problem is not merely of foodgrains, although it is a serious problem, but also of nutrition. In this country we have unfortunately considered food merely in terms of foodgrains. I think we must change our thinking on this and make the term 'food' a much wider term and include all items which can give nourishment, specially so in dealing with growing children.

The other question which was stressed here is that of rising prices which is one which is causing us much concern. To some extent a developing economy does bring about rising prices. It has been so practically in every country and the real reply to it lies in greater production and the supply of essential consumer goods through institutionalised arrangements like the Super Bazar, which keeps prices down. Wherever we have this kind of arrangement we find that some relief has been given to the people. The President has mentioned that a major objective, in the economic sphere, is to achieve greater production, and to secure more active support, participation and involvement of the people and the cooperation of all parties. The objectives have not been questioned but they should represent an agreed national urge and a national will. We must all now concentrate our energies towards rapid transformation. When I say this I do not mean that there has been no transformation in the last twenty years because a great deal has been done, and many of our problems are because of this rapid transformation. Transformation and change do create their own problems; they do create new demands and today we are on the threshold of a new era. The post-independence generation requires many things which the earlier generation did not and they rightly demand them. Here again in the speeches of the Opposition Members we had such divergent views as those expressed by hon. Member,

Shri Dahyabhai Patel, and on the other side by Shri Niren Ghosh and Dr. Ahmad. Mr. Dahyabhai Patel was for less control and the others were for more State control. We are not tied to dogmas, but we still do believe in socialism, not as a dogma but because we want to work for people as a whole, not for any one group or class interests. While we believe in equal rights, at the same time, we believe, as I have repeatedly stated in this House, that there are weaker sections which need special help. But the aim is always to have the maximum production in the shortest possible time. One of the factors which have hampered efficiency is delay in decision. We have now appointed a Special Officer in the Cabinet Secretariat to ensure quick decisions and to investigate delay and to pursue matters to see that nothing gets blocked.

We are also making an effort to mobilise managerial talent and to secure adequate technocratic association. The Deputy Prime Minister is applying his mind to the tightening of tax collection and to simplifying procedures of this collection. Other important measures are those of export promotion and austerity in consumption, especially of exportable articles.

A question which has been occupying the minds not only of the Government but of many different organisations and people is how to make the fullest utilisation of the potential and capacity for industrial production. Now I have urged an urgent survey of idle and unutilised capacity and also a high-level review of the causes of low profitability in the working of the public sector. One of the expenses is the heavy outlay on housing. We are trying to check this. But at the same time, it is important to give reasonable amenities to the people who have to work in out-of-the-way places where no facilities are available. We are also attempting a greater economy and a more strict financial discipline.

The President has mentioned about a review of the structure and functioning of the Planning Commission in view of the new difficulties that we face and in view of certain changed circumstances. The Planning Commission has done good work in the past, but all work should constantly be reviewed to see that it meets the requirements of the day, and we are thinking of re-organisation at all levels. Up to now, there was a certain amount of duplication between the Commission and the Ministry. This we are attempting to reduce. The Administrative Reforms Commission is going to make recommendations which we expect shortly. And we also intend to discuss these matters with the Chief Ministers.

Some hon. Members have commented on the fact that more definite policies were not stated in the President's Address. I am sure they will realise that it was difficult to do so in this present session, specially because there are these different Governments in the States. It is necessary to talk thing over with them and to have their views on a number of matters before we can express ourselves finally. And one of the matters that we have also referred to them is the question of the recommendation made by the Reforms Commission regarding the Lok Pal to look into various allegations and the question of integrity of those who are in high offices. The Central Government has agreed in principle to the need for institutional arrangement, but we have also to get the views of the States since they are also involved in this.

We are also awaiting recommendations regarding labour of the Gajendragadkar Commission. Government is fully aware of the difficulties faced by Government servants. But at the same time, we feel that a mere wage increase is not the real answer to their

economic difficulties. Indeed a mere wage increase may well prove self-defeating as it gets up into this spiral of rising prices.

Now one matter which has caused a great deal of concern in the South is the question of language. There is, as we have repeatedly stated, no question of imposing Hindi on any one. Every State is free to adopt its regional language in its own areas, and English will remain an associate language as long as it is deemed necessary. We would like to bring in legislation as soon as possible. The whole argument about Hindi sometime goes off the rails. It is not a question of one part of the country trying to force something on another part. It is a question of what is the practical necessity for the whole. It is essential to have a national link language, and Hindi was thought of as such a link. At no time was it in competition with any of the regional languages. Already many people in the South have been learning Hindi and those of them who are here working in large numbers in the North have shown how quickly and easily they learn the languages of the North wherever they work–not only Hindi, but in Bengal, Bengali, in Assam, Assamese and so on.

I have mentioned already about special attention being paid to the weaker sections of our population. Now many special programmes have been initiated and worked out, but we are fully aware that they have not been adequate and that we will have to pay far greater attention to these under-privileged sections of our people and especially Harijans and tribals and some of our minorities. These are the people who are in need of more specific programmes, and not only assurances but the implementation of those assurances, and that we will do.

Now just one word about our foreign policy. Our foreign policy has had two objectives really, the national interest and international co operation and peace. I think that our policy has been fully vindicated, and if it remains unchanged, it is not just because we want to stick to something which we have said and we are rigid about it, but because we feel that it still serves our national interest. A policy, of course, in whatever sphere it is, is constantly reviewed in the light of national and international events.

With regard to Pakistan Government's policy remains one which is of a positive approach and we will continue to make every effort for greater understanding and goodwill. We believe that it is only in friendship and co-operation that both the countries can deal with the major problem which is basically that of battling against poverty, and it has distressed us deeply that our relationship should have been different. I think it would be futile for us to harbour distrust or mutual illwill. But in view of what has been happening it is not always easy.

Some hon. Members have referred to China. Here again, our policy is well known. We do not want to close the door. But we have to find a way in which some basis is created for talks or for some kind of discussion. And I do not think it is India which has closed this door; on the other hand, it is the Chinese Government who is continuously trying to provoke us. We have no quarrel with the Chinese people and we wish them well. But we certainly feel that that Government could modify their stand of constant provocation and propaganda against us.

The Home Minister has already made a statement regarding the emergency. I know how anxious hon. Members have been that the emergency should be lifted and perhaps,

they know that I myself have been very anxious for this. Certain conditions existed whereby it was not possible to do this immediately. But now we want to go ahead. I think hon. Members know that for nearly a year now recourse to emergency powers has been stopped in almost all the States and now, from the end of June, it will be lifted in all areas except those sensitive parts on the border where national security may still demand its continuance. But I can assure the House that it is not something which we want to abuse or to make use of unless it is absolutely essential.

Now, our problems and concerns as I said in the beginning, are not of a single party. The nation is facing an extremely critical period. It is critical because of the aggression. All nations after war have faced difficult times. If you go through history, you will find that there are certainly natural effects of fighting, which lead to economic difficulties, inflation and so on. It was very bad luck that this coincided with the period of drought and again, it has coincided with this new look towards democracy which we welcome but which does make it a little more difficult because of different points of view and so on. So, unless the leaders of all the parties are willing to cooperate and to find some way out, it will be difficult for us. All parties do not agree on what is the path to follow and, therefore, sometimes a consensus has to be achieved. The meetings which I have had with the Chief Ministers uptill now have given me the hope that there will be full cooperation from both sides, from the side of the Centre as well as their side. But we have yet to tackle specific problems, for instance, with regard to food and other matters. I am sure that if there is goodwill on both sides, we can face these problems together, and I can certainly assure them that it will not be for want of trying on our part.

Here in Parliament also, we have started a system of consulting the leaders of the opposition. I hope that we can form small groups from all parties in order to discuss specific problems, not just general discussions, and this will help to get this kind of concensus, because in this difficult period I am sure that all of us–no matter which party we belong to–have one aim, which is to march forward with vigour and speed to solve the very difficult questions which our country is facing.

I am not dismayed at the problems because any person who is living faces problems and difficulties; any nation which is alive faces these problems. But what does disturb me is the depression or despair which is voiced here. Our country has shown vitality. That vitality is capable of dealing with these problems and difficulties and we must, therefore, face them with confidence. If we lose confidence in ourselves or in our people, for which there is absolutely no cause–our people have come up not only to our expectations but beyond our expectations in times of crisis,–it will be difficult. And I know that if we also work together, the people will be with us and will cooperate in the fullest measure. Therefore, we must have confidence in ourselves and our capacity to tackle these problems quickly and with determination. If we have this spirit and instead of trying to pick holes in things, we try to evolve a method by which we can go forward in the quickest possible manner, then we will find that many of these questions which have been raised here can be solved in the national interest and in the way that our wonderful people deserve.

Thank you.

National Development*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Parliament has met after three crucial months during which the political scene in India is transformed. This is a phenomenon which proves the vitality of our country, the vitality of our democratic system and the faith of our people in our system.

Life is always changing. It is not only the Congress but even the hon. Members opposite who must adjust to those changes. As I said on a previous occasion here, now all of us, the Congress and the other parties, are in Government and outside Government. We see here many new faces and I had hoped that new ideas would also emerge. But listening to the debate—I would like to assure hon. Members that even though I was not present here all the time I did listen to almost all the speeches from my room—I was disappointed. I thought new ideas would emerge—ideas which would help to strengthen our democracy and our country. But I did not see much evidence of this. I do not grudge my hon. friends opposite their sense of elation or pleasure at the success they have gained in some States. I welcome the fact that they now share not only power but also the responsibility that goes with power. I am not much concerned with which party sits on which side in what State. What is important is that whichever side is in power uses the opportunity to solve the problems which confront our country. Along with this positive aspect, change brings with it fresh challenges, also certain dangers against which we have to guard. Here and there, there are evidences of small groups belonging to different sides, this side as well as the other side, who have tried to place themselves in a position to bargain. There are some who are attracted to politics today when politics means an opportunity for power, and they are using this opportunity to criticise those who joined politics at a time when it meant unmitigated hardship. I am referring to the many Members of the Congress, some of whom are now in the House and a very large number outside, who have sacrificed a great deal... for the Congress, not merely because Congress is a party but because the Congress stood for certain vital values in the country.

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All of you were also in the Congress**. I am not denying that. But that does not mean that you should now consider that everything that is in the Congress is bad and that you should not recognise the very genuine sacrifices which so many genuine and sincere and dedicated workers have made to the cause of freedom and the cause of building the country after freedom.

The most important question which we face today is the question of food and of drought in certain parts of the country. The other day... certain Members referred to my visit to Bihar

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *L.S. Deb.*, 5 April, 1967, cc. 3004 - 23.

** Replying to Shri M.R. Masani's remark : "Only in the Congress ?".

and U.P. Therefore, I would like to say a few words on this matter. I have been to Palamau, Gaya and Mirzapur over the last weekend. Never have I seen the Gangetic plains so dry. The recent rains gave a little relief in the sense that they have helped some grass to grow, reducing the shortage of fodder and also delaying the crisis about the availability of drinking water. But this is a crisis that has only been postponed and we will have to face it within a short time.

I found that a great deal of work was being done. But I also found the need to accelerate this work and to extend it and expand it in every way. The Centre will do all it can to supply needed equipment and store. We are also making an effort to enlist the support of all possible people who can help in this. A suggestion was made, which I welcome, that ex-servicemen living in those areas might help in some of these problems.

Unfortunately, there was a set back to relief work due to the elections. Now we have to regain the momentum again. The State Governments are doing the job and non-official agencies are also active, specially in Bihar. I would like to pay a tribute here to the Bihar Relief Committee, of which Shri Jayaprakash Narayan is the Chairman. He has gathered together a band of workers who are doing excellent work. The special complication in Bihar is that of the outbreak of smallpox.

In Palamau District, I heard that 2 [Sic] lakhs are at work out of a total of 2 [Sic] lakhs of the working population, but more help is needed from non-official agencies because the coming three summer months will be exceedingly critical.

In Mirzapur I found a large number of aged and destitute and, as hon. Members may have read in the newspapers, I was given some reports of starvation deaths. I, naturally, took up this matter with the authorities. I was given two representations, one giving specific names, a list of 13, of which the authorities have already investigated 11 names and they have various causes for death. The other representation mentioned the figure 50 but gave no details of the names or where these people came from. Naturally, unless we have more detailed information, it is difficult to look into this.

This question of starvation deaths was also taken up by the hon. Members here....The need of the hour is to provide all the relief that is necessary and all that is possible whether Government provides it or non-official agencies or the people themselves.

The foodgrains supply is in shortage all over the country and we cannot meet the full demand of all the States. The Food Minister and I have had talks with the Chief Ministers of Kerala and Bihar. We will discuss this matter in greater detail at the proposed Chief Ministers' Conference this weekend.

I feel, as I have said earlier also, there is need for a national sharing of the distress, the need to mobilise all our energies and all our resources, to cut our lavishness and waste. This is something which we can only do with the full co-operation of the States. It is something which we must sit down and discuss and formulate a plan which can be carried out and implemented in all parts of the country.

Some have said that we would rather starve than import food. I am afraid, I cannot agree with this and I feel that it is an irresponsible statement to make in the present conditions.

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It is because we cannot import as much as is needed*; but it is a problem which the entire country faces and it is, as some hon. Members said, a national problem.

When I talked of co-operation with hon. Members outside, it is not on small matters of procedure and thing like that—they are important and if we can work together, it is a good thing—but far more important is to get cooperation in these matters which are matters of national importance and of life and death for our people. Certainly, food comes in that category.

Food and drought relief are the foremost problems for us. Last year we faced the same kind of problem and it was only through a Herculean effort that we were able to avert a great human tragedy. This year is even more difficult because reserves are depleted and there is considerable uncertainty about supplies which we can get and which we need.

The Food Minister has already outlined the programme of short-term crops and we must all see that this programme is made a success. There is also the need to accelerate intensive cultivation programmes all over the country. Many steps are being taken to deal with this immediate problem in Bihar and in eastern U.P. Some people here mentioned Rajasthan. I would like to say that we have not at all forgotten that Rajasthan also faces this problem and so do areas of other States.

There was the joint Emergency Committee for Bihar set up under the Food Minister with the Bihar Chief Minister and his colleagues. In the short time, it has already met three times.

There are some figures which I would like to give to the hon. Members. I am told that nearly 6.5 lakhs people are employed on relief works or on Plan schemes in Bihar and the number may increase to 15 lakhs in the months of maximum distress which are May and June. Over 3.5 lakhs people have been given gratuitous relief from the State plus 2.6 lakhs, who are fed in free kitchens run by non-official agencies, that is, the Ramakrishna Mission, the Marwari Relief Society and other agencies. The international agencies like the CARE and the UNICEF are giving milk to 14.6 lakh people. We also received a gift of 10,000 tons from Italy which is valued at about Rs. 60 lakhs to Rs. 70 lakhs and this has also been used for giving relief through voluntary agencies.

Drinking water is an acute problem and schemes worth over Rs. 5 crores have been sanctioned by the Central Government.

118 rigs are being mobilised from all available resources–our own as well as abroad–by the Government, the Army and the private agencies and so on. About 66 rigs are working and another 33 rigs have reached the sites. Institutions like the Geological Survey of India, the Oil and Natural Gas Commission, the UNICEF and so on are helping in this and also the Governments of U.K. and Canada have offered to airlift the rigs. We are also airlifting other

* Responding to Shri S.M. Banerjee's remark : "We are importing and starving both".

essential things. In cattle camps, half a million heads of cattle have been provided and there are short-term fodder crop plans for 130,000 acres. The food supply to Bihar is being progressively increased from 72,000 tons in last October to 1,85,000 tons in April this year. Over Rs. 50 lakhs have been given from the Drought Relief Fund to U.P. and Bihar. Health measures are also being taken but I must confess that these need to be stepped up considerably.

Sir, the elections have thrown up certain political challenges. But the real challenge is, and it remains, the economic challenge of prices and production. Many hon. Members opposite have talked about the economic situation. This is natural because it is a serious one. But, as usual, the diagnosis as well as the treatment has differed from person to person. This is what I mean to say, when I say that we should get together on certain things. Let us have some kind of a minimum programme at least on which we can agree, just on one or two national issues.

The hon. Member, Mr. Masani, painted a gloomy picture. Mr. Hiren Mukerjee said that devaluation was at the root of all ills. Others questioned the food policy and so on. The main cause really is fall in production, mainly the fall in agricultural production. Shri Morarjibhai has given the blunt facts. We are not making any attempt to cover up anything or to hide anything. We have put all the difficulties and the seriousness of the situation very clearly before the House. We must now do everything possible to increase production and to cut existing expenditure to the bone.

Higher production and budgetary discipline can give some respite from high prices. I think, that streamlining the administration and procedures is the first need and the second is to use the full capacity of already installed plants, and to have a full survey of their capacities. It is necessary that we try to achieve our target of *swadeshi* in the next 10 years.

We are very anxious that conditions should be created in which science and technology can be applied to practical problems of the nation, the economic development as well as the security of the nation. Therefore, it is necessary to have a greater interflow between institutions of research and development and those connected with implementation of programmes and also to have a larger measure of technical, scientific and technocratic association at appropriate levels of policy-making and implementation, so that a climate can be created for the most effective fulfilment of tasks according to modern methods of technology and science.

In administration also, the changed situation needs changed methods and change in outlook also. We are trying to give greater autonomy to public sector plants and to simplify financial procedure so as to reduce delays which are costly and which have prevented so many of our schemes from getting going.

We have policy planning cells which can at all stages look forward and see how the present programme fit into the programmes for the future.

Many speakers have talked about the public sector. Those whose creeds disapprove of the public sector as a whole, naturally saw nothing but failure about them. I am not prepared to admit that failure. There have certainly been shortcomings, but there has been good work also. I do agree that the public sector must be run well and must produce results; must create new resources, and that we should try our utmost to give new re-orientation to the public sector which would increase its efficiency and allround profitability, modernise management, consolidate their investments and make efficiency their watchword.

Much interest was evinced in the future of the Planning Commission. The Administrative Reforms Commission has received its interim report from the Study Team and I suppose, we will get their recommendations in a short time. Therefore, I do not want to anticipate what they are going to say. But I am sorry that the Planning Commission should have come in for so much criticism. It has played a valuable, even a historic, role. It has translated the economic vision of our nation-builders into concrete policies and it has provided a useful forum for discussions between States and the Centre. It would have been very difficult for the Government to achieve this without the Planning Commission. The objective expert composition of the Planning Commission has naturally helped. I have felt that the Commission should concentrate much more on the task of economic development, *i.e.*, analysing factors and trends, assessing strategy and, if possible, it should present various alternatives. That is, it should be a kind of an expert body which would give certain alternatives. Of course, the task of actual implementation falls on the State Governments.

Another criticism made here of the Planning Commission was that it was encroaching on the States. But the major decisions on the Plan, the size, strategy, priorities and allocations, are always taken by the National Development Council which consists of both Central and State representatives and even in the old days, despite the fact that there was the same party in power in the States, there were pulls and counter-pulls ; there were occasions when States' interests were not always satisfied according to the desire of the State representatives and there was some clash with the Centre. This will, no doubt, continue. I sincerely hope that this will not be taken to mean that the Centre is not co-operating with the States, but only that the State problem has to be viewed in the context of the national problem. All of us have to adjust our programmes in that light and in that perspective.

Federalism means that Government functioning is shared by and divided among different of foci of authority.

With the changes which have come about in the recent elections, the NDC naturally assumes greater importance. All the schemes which we take up are national schemes, whether they are in the State sector or the Central sector, because the welfare and progress of the country are indivisible.

Many hon. Members have talked of Centre-State relationship. Certain Chief Ministers have also come out with statements on this matter. I read the other day the Address of the Governor of Madras. I think there need be no apprehension of friction. The Constitution is strong enough and also resilient enough. The problem of Centre-State relations is an old problem... I think the Constitution was drawn up with foresight and its spirit is both accommodating and reconciliatory. It spells out division of functions to the extent possible and leaves the rest to discussion.

Now, even in these three weeks of the new Government, I am heartened at the kind of response which we have had from the State Governments. I would like to declare once more that our own attitude will always be to work together with them in the national interest.

Even if a subject is in the State list, such as Agriculture or Education, inter-State and Centre-State interdependence are unavoidable.

Shri A.K. Gopalan spoke of provincial autonomy. I would like him to appreciate more fully the spirit of our Constitution, and I would like him to look once again at the statement made by the Chief Minister of Kerala who said that time must be given for these relations to develop.

Shri A.K. Gopalan wanted a higher share of income-tax and export earnings. Under the Constitution, as you all know, Finance Commission goes into this matter every five years. As for grants, the Study Team of the Administrative Reforms Commission is going into the question of Centre-State finance.

Many hon. Members referred to the problem of corruption. We are as anxious as anybody to maintain the highest standards of personal integrity because we think that this is essential in public life. The Administrative Reforms Commission has recommended the institution of a Lokpal and a Lok Ayukt. We have nearly completed formulating our views, and we have approached the States. We would like to have their views also before finalising our own.

A matter which creates great emotion is that of language. Many Members have spoken on this matter, Shri V. Krishnamoorthi talked of the betrayal of non-Hindi-speaking people. Shri H.N. Mukerjee talked of the need for imaginative handling. I think that a very good reply to this was given by Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha who very clearly said that we had no desire to impose Hindi on the South. Friends of the DK have spoken with deep passion on this matter. Our view is well known. We believe that all our languages are national languages, and of equal status. And any of them can be made the official language, if a State so wants. But it is important also for all of us to be able to understand each other and this was the real reason why we felt that one language should be a national link language. We have given a solemn assurance that English will be retained at the Centre as an associate link language as long as it is deemd necessary. We shall move a Bill in the next session to give formal effect to this assurance.

I should like to make a reference also to Urdu. I am very concerned with this problem. When certain deputations came to see me earlier, we assured them that this matter would be taken up most urgently. Here again, in some States there are new Governments. We will take up this matter when the Chief Ministers come here, and I hope that it will be satisfactorily solved.

Reference was made to the delay in announcing Government's decision regarding the Education Commission's Report. The Education Minister himself was a member of this Commission. I am sure he will set a definite date by which to announce his decision. He is also setting up a Youth Division in the Education Ministry.

A new Member spoke about the President's powers. Our Constitution is clear on this issue. Our conventions are well-established. I do not think there is any justification for imaginary fears of friction.

I should like to say one more word here about our deep concern about some sections in our country who have been under-privileged and who, in spite of various programmes, have not really had their due share. I am speaking now of our Harijan brothers and sisters, of our tribal brothers and sisters, of our hill people and of the very large mass of people who are

known as the landless labour. These people have really had the worst of the difficult situation and we must bend all our energies to help them now in every way.

I should like to say a few words about foreign affairs and our relations with foreign countries, whether they be our neighbours or whether they are situated far off. Many Members have touched upon this. The hon. Member, Shri Masani said that we are friendless. I think it is very difficult to judge who is whose friend. I do not think that we are friendless. In times of need, countries with different systems, different persuasions, have come to our help. I think the list of our friends, if we are to go into detail, is a fairly comprehensive one and it covers practically all continents.

Our foreign relations are governed only by considerations of national interest and the nation's security and are rooted in the firm belief that mankind is one family and that to exist we also have to co-exist. That is why we have tried always to further our national itnerests from the economic, political and strategic points of view and secondly to promote international co-operation and peace. This was our aim in the past and this is what will guide us in the future.

I want to assure Members about one thing. Some of them have a feeling that we pursue a particular policy merely because it has been a declared policy. All policies are constantly under review, because if they do not serve the purpose of today, there is naturally no point in continuing with the same policies. If we continue a particular policy today, it is because on reviewing and re-testing, we feel that it meets the needs of today, that it meets the needs of national interests.

We also have a fundamental dedication to championing the cause of all people who are fighting against racialism and colonialism. Some people feel that... this is unnecessary or it is not our business, but we know from our own experience how much it meant to us when we were fighting for our freedom when there were people in other countries who appreciated our fight, and if they could not help us in any other way at least they could give moral support. Freedom is indivisible. Therefore, we are deeply concerned with the rights of the people of South Africa, of Angola, Mozambique, Portuguese Guinea, Southern Rhodesia, Aden and other countries which have yet to attain freedom.

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There are few things which are more dangerous than the consequences of racial war, and that is why we have opposed the policy followed in South Africa.

Some Members have talked of the need for a more positive policy towards Pakistan. Government entirely agree. We have always stated our point that it is necessary, in fact it is vital, for India and Pakistan to work in co-operation on as many issues and as many spheres as possible, because we are neighbours, because we share the same problems and difficulties. And we shall certainly continue to make every effort possible to have greater understanding and goodwill with Pakistan. It distresses us deeply that our relationship should not have been one of amity, and that there should be considerable distrust between these two neighbours.

With regard to China, our policy is well known, and here agian, we have no quarrel with the Chinese people, and we would certainly like not to have a rigid attitude in this, but we

feel that some indication should come or some situation be created in which we can get out of our present rut. This has been completely lacking, but we do not believe that we should close the door on that matter.

Prof. Mukerjee said that we have been silent on Vietnam. There are other Members who are constantly telling us that we talk too much about Vietnam. Sir, actually, I do not think we are silent, nor have we overstated the case. We have expressed our view whenever it was necessary to do so. The House knows the Government's views on this. We fervently hope that peace will return to Vietnam soon. We have welcomed the various peace moves which have been made, including the one by the Secretary-General, U Thant, whom we shall have the pleasure of welcoming amidst us some time next week. And it is our hope that the problem can be taken away from the battle field and brought to the conference table.

I also want to talk about something which is rather delicate. For some time now, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, systematic attempts have been made in this House by certain quarters to raise questions in one form or another about gifts received by me especially from foreign dignitaries, or about my personal possessions. I have denied these allegations on the floor of the House and I want to do so again. Since I became a Member of Parliament or entered Government, or earlier when I was a private citizen, I should say that, to the best of my knowledge, I did not infringe any of our conventions and rules relating to the acceptance of such gifts. The allegations and insinuations which have been sought to be raised are false and malicious. I have denied the specific allegations from time to time.

Mention was recently made about a diamond necklace given to me over ten years ago by the King of Saudi Arabia, and I have written to the Speaker at some length about this. I am not really worried about these allegations even though they are made day in and day out. But there is a deliberate and sustained attempt at character assassination and it is for this House to judge and decide how long this personal villification and maligning can be allowed to continue.

I would like to take this opportunity to make a few other observations on this matter. In 1955, the then Prime Minister, my father, expressed the view that it would be desirable to apply the *toshakana* rules to Ministers also and that they should not retain expensive presents. He went on to observe that as the *toshakana* was not equippped properly to preserve the many things which were given they should be sent to museums and other suitable places where they might remain as state property, rather than as the personal property of the recipient. That is how he and I treated the presents which we received. Except for a stol of sable skin which was presented to me by Mr. Khrushchev on the Russian trip, I have not retained any other expensive gifts. I kept this gift because in the manner in which it was given, it was felt that it would perhaps be misunderstood if it were handed over. It is not the custom to make public the details about the presents received from Heads of States and Governments or other high dignitaries from friendly foreign countries. They vary considerably in nature and any publication of a list of presents, such as might possibly give rise to embarrassing comparisons between country and country, would obviously not be in keeping with the propriety and the dignity of our relations with those countries. It would also not be in the public interest to reveal how individual presents were disposed of because such disclosures might conceivably be misunderstood as an act of discourtesy to the dignitaries from whom they were received. But a full list of all these things is however kept.

Under the code of conduct which was adopted sometime ago and which was laid before Parliament, all Union Ministers send returns of their personal assets and liabilities to the Prime Minister. Although the code does not specifically lay down any procedure for the Prime Minister, for my part I have been following the practice of placing my own statement along with the records of my colleagues.

There is no intention on my part nor on the part of my colleagues to evade answering allegations even of a personal character which any Member might choose to level. We have rules and conventions about the manner in which such allegations can be raised by one Member against another, whether in Government or not. These rules and conventions naturally take into account the fact that what any of us chooses to say on the floor of this House is fully protected against legal consequences and highly privileged. I think it is within the right of this House and indeed appropriate, that it should be possible to raise allegations against Members of Government or even against another Member which relate to the period of Membership of the House or of Government. It would be particularly open to a Member to raise such allegations against a minister of a nature which involves abuse of public office.

I say all this with a sense of hesitation because from time to time various things have been said which concern me personally and I consider it my duty to bring them up here today. I sincerely feel that what this House must consider are some of the general issues that arise, including, if I may say so, in all humility, the question of how long one single Member or two should be allowed to persist with wild, irresponsible and baseless allegations against the Prime Minister of the country.

When I began to speak, I spoke about certain national problems. Some hon. Members opposite tend to give the impression that it is only they who are concerned with the poverty in the country or with the difficulties in the country. Indeed, it is not so. In speaking of these, they do not speak only of the present period of difficulties or the last year or two.

But they try to sweep up all the 20 years since Independence-years in which considerable progress was made, years in which the very face of this nation has been transformed.

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Well, I think this is there for all to see. Except in the tribal parts and the drought-affected areas, there is great difference from before in the lives of our peasantry, in the lives of our workers and so on. But it is true that (a difficult situation has arisen) since the last few years and notably since 1962 since the Chinese invasion, followed by other repeated invasions, alongwith which we had this unprecedented drought. Hon. Members may know that at least in Uttar Pradesh, it is really three years since we have had hardly any rain, and even in the year before, that is, the fourth year, rainfall was deficient. So, a very difficult situation has arisen because of this, and at the same time, we have had a rise in population and rising demands from our people.

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Well, that is true.* There are many causes for it. As I repeatedly said, we are not trying to hide anything. We do not want to run away from the shortcomings of the Government. They are there; there have been shortcomings in implementation; we all know there have been, but it does not help to keep on underlining the shortcomings and ignoring the achievements. All that I say is, let us see the picture in its reality; it is not that the situation is not grim today. The statements made by the Deputy Prime Minister and the Food Minister have very clearly outlined how critical and grim the situation is, and what a tremendous national effort will be needed in order to face it and to overcome it. Therefore, we must all get together to create the national will to face this kind of problem. (*Interruption*). As I said, we are not running away from the fact that we might have made mistakes, but the situation is also caused by many, many happenings and events which were beyond our control, such as the invasion on our borders, the increase in defence expenditure, which naturally had to follow, and other problems which I have already mentioned.

National problems require a national outlook, and a national effort. Many hon. Members opposite feel that they have suggested a national government. But if we cannot even get together on these problems and form a basis of working on policy, I do not see how a national government can function in the present circumstances. It is for hon. Members opposite and all the different parties to show that they are willing to tackle these problems on a national basis....

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and to find at least what is the minimum common factor which could straightaway be implemented....Our primary task is that of economic growth and of the rapid transformation of our economy. And it is a tremendous task to transform this great and ancient country in keeping with the hopes of the new generation. We are deeply concerned with the difficulties of the masses of our people and the question of inequality. This question has come up and rightly, many times in this House and it is a question to which we must give deep thought and try to solve. Because, no matter what we have achieved, it loses its importance if the benefits of it do not go to the masses of our people and if there are many amongst our people who still remain and feel underprivileged. This is our major and first duty today to see how we can minimise this inequality and help those people who are most in need of our help.

I am fully conscious of the rights of the minorities. We must also pay the greatest and speedy attention to all their right demands.

One hon. Member said that the essence of democracy is debate. I entirely agree with him. This is so, but it also means getting the job done. Now we spend a great deal of time on debate. Very often this clarifies many issues. I am not at all against debate, but I think we must at least give the same effort and cooperation in getting the job done. If we can work out this problem, then of course the debates would also have more point. As it is, in a debate many points are expressed. But most people go in different directions and the net result of it is not the kind of action that can have meaning for the people.

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* Agreeing with Shri S.M. Banerjee who said, "Rising prices also".

In the President's Address, it was not possible to outline more clearly certain aspects of policy. That will be clearer in the next session. But certainly the Address gave some idea of what is to be done immediately. These we must take up as national problems and see that we solve them. We must see that the extremely difficult period through which we are passing, is not without courage and that whatever unity can be is brought about so that we are cleared of it. Although the situation is grim, our people do have the courage and the capacity to meet it. It is up to us to help them to do so. My plea to the hon. Members is that they should commend the President's Address to the people, that through what it has outlined we should be able to take at least one step forward in the right direction.

The Challenges Ahead*

Mr. Vice-Chairman, the purpose of the President's Address is to present a broad picture of the state of the nation and to give some indication of the Government's policies so as to enable the House to evaluate the working of the Government's programmes. It gives us valuable opportunity to know the views of hon. Members on the whole. Especially in this House, the debate has been of a high level. Sometimes hon. Members seem to stray to what seem to us to be points of lesser importance and therefore they take away somewhat from the seriousness of the debate.

Now the Address seeks to present the Government's point of view freely and frankly and covers some important aspects of our national life. On the economic front the President has referred to what he has called milestones on the road to our economic recovery.

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Mr. Vice-Chairman, although I was not in the House I would like to inform Mr. Bhupesh Gupta that I did hear his speech. not the whole of it but most of it, in my office room. So we are fully aware of his views on the various matters which he expressed here, and I would be grateful if he would now allow me to go on with my thoughts, though he may not be in agreement with them just as we are not in full agreement with what he has said.

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There has been a decisive upward turn in our agriculture; there has been recovery in a large segment of our industry and there has been relative price stability and striking improvement in the balance of payments. I think this is a specific indication of the concrete picture of these critical sectors. What the President dealt with were facts; it was not guess-work. The President pointed out that the agricultural production of 95.6 million tonnes last year was 6 million tonnes higher than the previous peak of 1964-65. My hon. friend opposite, Shri Lokanath Misra, ascribed this achievement in agriculture wholly to favourable monsoons. Now, nobody will deny that monsoons are very relevant to agricultural production. I think one other Member—I think it was an hon. Member from the Communist bencher—also talked of purely fortuitous circumstances. He used a rather peculiar word and said that the President "gloats" over the havoc caused by floods. This is completely and obviously untrue. The President referred to the grave damage caused

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *R.S. Deb.*, 25 February, 1969. cc. 1375-89.

by the floods and drought which I had occasion to see myself when I went to West Bengal, Bihar and other places. In regard to the monsoon, we all know that we could not have achieved this increase of 6 million tonnes, as the hon. Member Shri Musafir rightly pointed out, only because of favourable monsoon because there has been an increase over the previous peak production. I do not want to go into the details of this because I have spoken on this matter earlier and have expressed not only my gratitude but my admiration for the peasants and farmers of India who have taken to these new methods and who have toiled very hard indeed in order to increase agricultural production.

With regard to exports they have registered a striking improvement and there has been an increase both in quantum as well as in diversification.

Again, this is not a question of guess-work, but of hard facts. The process of industrial recovery has begun and the President gave some specific figures in this regard. He talked of prices also in similar specific terms. He spoke of the very great importance which we attach to irrigation. We are all aware of the urgent need to review our irrigation programmes and the growing needs of the people in the light of the changes which are taking place in our rural areas.

Since the President's speech, the Economic Survey has been placed before the House and a detailed survey of our achievements, as well as our programmes, will soon take place, once we discuss the grants Ministry by Ministry. The point is what are the vital problems which affect our national life and what are the instruments which we are going to adopt to solve these problems. The problem of unemployment is very much before us. So is the problem of regional imbalance, of disparities, of balance of trade and of the uplift of the underprivileged sections of our people. For all these problems, our answer is an integrated and comprehensive Plan. Our national Plan reflects the desire of the nation to tackle all these specific problems, not only on a broad front, but on a long-term basis.

Many Members have referred to unemployment and there are also certain amendments which relate to this very important matter. The hon. Member, Shri Mohan Dharia drew attention to it and also Shri D.L. Sen Gupta. My hon. friend opposite, Shri Mulka Govinda Reddy, did so also, though I must say that I do not share his gloomy forecast about the youth of our country. This problem is an economic problem. It is also a human problem and no Government can possibly be insensitive to it, nor ignore it in any way. Indeed, it is this concern which led the Planning Commission to constitute a Committee of Experts on Unemployment Estimates in August last year. The Committee consists of eminent persons. Perhaps the House knows that Prof. M.H. Dantwala is its Chairman. Prof. K.N. Raj and Prof. B.D. Lahiri are its members. The Committee has been asked to go into the estimates of unemployment which were worked out for the previous Plans, to examine the data and methodology used in arriving at the estimates and to advise the Planning Commission on the various issues connected with the problem of unemployment. In a country such as ours there are obvious difficulties in making precise and quantitative estimates. We hope that the Committee will present its report very soon, during this year. Both as regards disparities and unemployment, the measures must be short-term as well as long-term. The engineers' unemployment can be solved as the Plan tempo picks up again, but several Plans will be

required before the rural unemployment problem can be finally solved. It is not that importance is not given to these matters but the mere size of the problem is such that it must take time before a satisfactory solution can be reached.

Similarly, various steps are being taken to tackle the question of regional imbalances, whether within one State or between one State and another. The Planning Commission has asked the States to identify specially backward areas in each State and all except one have done so. I hope the State which remains will also quickly send its planned suggestions. But the whole point of national development is that gradually these benefits must percolate to all our regions. We all know that at one time vast areas of Rajasthan had no knowledge at all of and had no irrigation at all, but we now have projects which are transforming the face of these areas. Similarly, irrigation has to extend to other parts of Rajasthan, to other areas which have special difficulties such as Telengana, Rayalaseema, the arid parts of North Mysore, as well as many other parts of the country.

The problem which has often exercised our minds here in the House and certainly that of the Government and all those who are concerned with the welfare of the country is the problem of the speedy uplift of our Harijan and tribal brothers and sisters. The hon. Member, Shri Gaikwad, referred to it and so did other Members. Of all problems perhaps, I think, this is the one which causes me the greatest concern because, as I have said many times in public and perhaps here in the House also, while all the citizens are equal, those who are specially weak or who have had to suffer special disabilities must now get special care, so that they can catch up with the rest of the society. Although, in a way, the whole of India is underprivileged, when you compare it with many other countries, within itself there is no doubt that there are sections of the population which have suffered special disabilities not only physical, but also because of the attitude of society towards them. And so their welfare and speedy uplift is a matter of urgent concern. It is a sacred obligation which has been bequeathed to us by Gandhiji. The Congress has a long record of service to them. We are fully aware that although much has been done, very much more still remains to be done, especially in the economic sphere. Even though there are new programmes, we are not able to keep up with their rising expectations.

Education, as the House is aware, has expanded tremendoulsy. So has opportunity. I am only too conscious of the vastness of the problem and that what is being done, about providing opportunity, does not match the numbers with which we have to deal.

It is a matter of great distress, even of horror, that the sort of incidents which have taken place in Tanjore and in some other parts of the country should have occurred. We have all been filled with deep sorrow and shame that this should happen in our country. The most reprehensible acts have been committed in these places and in certain other parts of the country and I do not think there are words strong enough to condemn these acts of violence and brutality. But I would plead with the hon. Members of the House not to treat this as a party issue. It is a national issue. It is not that I am laying aside governmental responsibility with regard to economic programmes. That is there. But alongside with it, there is the social problem, the question of the attitudes of neighbours and this is not something which the Government can deal with. This is something that can be dealt with

by political parties, by non-political people, by the entire country reacting to this question and taking it upon itself. I would say even as a nation-wide movement, not to condemn, not to apportion blame, but to find out how we can change these social attitudes.

Legal steps may be necessary. Some have been taken such as the Untouchability Act, but some social monsters are hard to die and they have to be relentlessly pursued with all the combined strength of the Government, at the Centre, and at the States and of Society at large. At the same time, we must realise that none of these problems is susceptible to any dramatic or magic solutions. Solutions can only be long-term solutions which need determination and patience and which lie within the overall development of the national economy.

Some Members, I believe, mentioned that the President had not made a firm commitment about the Fourth Five Year Plan. I think he has made a very specific commitment; the document itself is at this moment under finalisation. As Members know, the Plan is finally adopted by the N.D.C. so that it is accepted formally by the Centre as well as by the State Governments. The N.D.C. meeting is being held, I believe, in the middle of next month. It is difficult to give a reply on this question to the Swatantra Party because they have from the beginning been against the whole process of planning. My hon. friend opposite said that he thought that the Planning Commission was the "Impediment to all national progress". I have some inkling of what his party would like us to do, but I am extremely doubtful as to whether not only our party, but many of the other parties represented here would like us to oblige him in following his path in this matter. In this question there really does not seem to be any meeting ground.

The other question which was raised and which comes up constantly for comment is that of monopolies. The proof of our concern in this matter is the Monopolies Bill and the high power Dutt Committee which has been formed. There is also a Committee set up to go into the whole question of licensing. It is true that the bigger companies by virtue of better managerial ability, resources and technical competence do take more advantage of facilities. We have found that this takes place even at lower levels with regard to the farmer and others, and the person who has certain facilities is able to take greater advantage of any programmes that are drawn up. We have constantly to see that the others are not left out of the programme and that they are also helped to make the most of these programmes. Shri Balachandra Menon, I believe, pointed out rightly that all the benefits of our new agricultural strategy have not gone to the poorer peasants. But even so—I cannot talk for the whole country but in many parts—even those who are poor have derived some benefit. But we must strive harder to help them especially those who are landless because they are one section of the people who face the hardest situation. Some amendments refer to the possibility of growth of new disparities among peasants. These are problems which do require corrective measures. But none of these specific problems which confront us today, whether it is employment or whether it is regional imbalance, is peculiar just to our country. They do today confront nearly all countries in one form or another.

I believe Shri Lokanath Misra commented on our complacency. I would like to assure him that we are far from complacent. While we do not believe in discouraging people by

constantly saying that nothing is being done, we are fully aware of the vastness of the task ahead, and in fact I think the President himself said there was no room for complacency; neither for complacency nor for rest. Today the scope is only for unrelenting hard work. We have a very long way to go to offset the effect of the past couple of years of difficulties. The suggestions made by hon. Members are welcome and we are always prepared to take counsel.

Several amendments concerned the Shiv Sena. Here again in some ways it is a Maharashtrian problem, but it is a problem which stretches across the country. The Shiv Sena has not only displayed attitudes but has acted in a manner which is dangerous to the unity of the country and to the prosperity of the country. It was only natural that this debate should concern itself with the regrettable events in Bombay, in Andhra Pradesh and elsewhere, because the news that came from these parts filled us with deep shock and disquiet. As I said the other day, this is a matter in which we must all cooperate together to see that the ways of violence are not taken for the redress of any real or imaginary grievances. One point which we must all accept, regardless of what party or what part of the country we belong to, is that every Indian citizen must have the right to live and to work in any part of India where he may wish to do. It is not a partisan issue; it is one which calls for an all-party constructive endeavour. This is something, I do not know by what word to call it, whether we can say it is a monster, which has to be resolutely fought in each State, in each community, within each party and I would also say within each individual; I must confess that no party is free from this. Although the Congress has fought against such attitudes, we cannot say that we are entirely free from them. This is a fight which must be continued. As I said, we must all work together in this fight if we have the welfare of our people at heart. The State Government took prompt and effective action. Police action was also taken when necessary and will be taken wherever it is necessary. But again here it is a question of social attitudes because on such issues the local people so quickly become emotional that a difficult situation is created in no time at all although by the time this escalation happens all parties would like to disclaim a hand in it. But the point is that we must all join before such things happen, to see that such parochial, communal, narrow-minded regional feelings do not get an opportunity to be aroused.

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We saw these happenings sometime ago in Ranchi, we saw these happenings in Bombay, in Andhra Pradesh and also in some of our villages where the most ghastly crimes have been committed in the name of caste or religion or some other thing. Sometimes there are economic reasons behind it, sometimes there is something else. It is a matter which can only be tackled constructively, not by trying to find out who is to blame but to see how they can be prevented in future.

The President did refer to the National Integration Council. We have called meetings of the Standing Committee which, I hope, will go into these matters in detail. Most parties are represented on it, but I am sorry that two parties are not. I hope that they also will change their minds and join us, because these problems transcend the narrow interests of any one party. They concern the nation as a whole. The ultimate solution can only be to arouse the social consciousness of the people as a whole.

It was natural and normal perhaps, since we are meeting so soon after the mid-term poll, that many Members should be concerned with the results. The elections brought varying fortunes for different parties in different States. Elections always do all over the world. I do not think this is a surprising thing.

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As I said somewhere else, this may be a new experience to some parties because to some parties winning is a new experience and to some parties losing is a new experience....

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I am glad that the hon. Member* is so happy because I do not think his own party has had any such conspicuous gain. I am glad that he is generous hearted enough to applaud the other parties who have won. I also would like to welcome the parties who have won. While during elections we certainly try that our own party might win–and we would certainly have liked it to win–it is no use saying that we would not. But we always respect the verdict of the electorate, and those people who have won, we welcome them, whether it is to Parliament or whether it is to the State Assembly.

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Therefore, I welcome the new Governments which have come in, whether it be in Punjab or West Bengal, to the family of Governments in this country (*Interruptions*).

It is inevitable also that references should be made to Centre-State relations, and several amendments, I believe, have been moved.

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The Centre-State question, as I have said before in this House, is not new. We had disagreement even when the Governments were of the same party ruling in the different States and we have them today when parties are of different hues in the different States. But it is no use getting over-obsessed with the problem. There will be difficulties, and we have to try and find a way out. I think it would be wrong to take either a very gloomy view of the picture or to try to take an opportunistic view of these relations. Our position is very clear which is that we believe in a policy of cooperation with all these States. We have to consider the fact that there are Governments of different policies. Each Government obviously cannot go entirely its way. It is not that we are blocking it in any way or trying to obstruct it. But every Government must first consider how the whole country can keep together and united and then only think of its own particular area.

I have seen references saying that the demands of a particular State must be met. Certainly they must be met. But what is the impediment in meeting them ? It is not that we do not want to meet the demand, it is that we are all suffering from the same difficulty,

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* Responding to Shri Bhupesh Gupta's observation, "I did not expect you to make this smudged utterance. But may your experience of losing live long and may our experience of winning gain".

that is lack of sufficient resources. We have limited resources and we simply cannot close our eyes to that fact, so that all States whether their Governments are Congress or non-Congress, are all equally dissatisfied. It is not that only a State in which there is a non-Congress Government or a United Front Government feels that it is being discriminated against, because there is no discrimination. But it is a fact that we are unable to meet all their demands for the very simple reason that we just do not have the resources with which to do so. But we do believe in equal and equitable treatment towards all the States, and we believe that there is a large field which calls for active and constant cooperation.

When I said that we accept the verdict of the people, it was not at all a formal statement; I really meant it. I really want to extend the hand of cooperation and friendship. And I hope that these Governments will go ahead and take up the basic task and be conscious, be fully aware, of the constraint of resources which applies to us no less than it applies to them. Neither the Centre nor the States have unlimited resources.

I would not say that Centre-State relations are deteriorating. I did not hear the speech but I believe that one member from the DMK said so. I must confess that my own impression was quite contrary because our relations with Tamil Nadu were steadily improving and I said this in my tribute to Shri Annadurai in Madras and also in the other House.

Shri Mulka Govinda Reddy and other members have suggested for a Centre-State Council. This is a matter which has also been discussed, and the House knows that we have purposeful and lively forums for Centre-State consultations. There is the N.D.C., there is the Chief Ministers' Conference, there are the Zonal Councils and there are numerous functional conferences and committees of Ministers. Some have done good work. So, there is no dearth of forums, and I do not think that there is any need felt for a new one. In the present circumstances any very rigid forum will not serve the purpose. In fact, if many new rules are laid down like this, we may well be in difficulties. It is not any mechanism by itself which creates goodwill. Goodwill and better relations can only come about by the behaviour of the people concerned. And given the goodwill and given the clear understanding the cooperation is a two-way affair, I do not think that there should be any occasion for friction.

When we have this frank and constructive discussion at political and official levels, it is possible to remove misunderstandings and to reach agreement. The difficulty really arises because it is not possible to solve all problems magically. Some hon. Members from the Opposition Benches seemed to have felt that it was possible to have some magic solutions. When they come into the Governments and when they have to face the people, they find that they are facing the same difficulties as we have been facing. So, it is very easy for them to throw the blame on the Centre. When they speak to us, they adopt a reasonable attitude. But then you find that there is some public statement which is not worded quite in the same way.

There is the agreement on the basis of Central assistance to the States. Now it is unanimous as between the Chief Ministers drawn from the different Parties. And it is, as

you know, madam a highly sensitive and knotty question. Similarly, we have some understanding regarding the principle on grants and loans to the States.

Some Members have blamed the Centre for not laying down some immediate criteria for solving the various disputes. There are water disputes, or boundary disputes. I did not want to refer to them here. One hon. Member, perhaps Shri Akbar Ali Khan, suggested that the Opposition parties should get together to solve them. It is a good suggestion. Now this is our difficulty that for none of these problems is there a hard and fast solution. It is not a question merely of taking a decision and implementing it. You have to try and take the largest number of people with you. You have to try to diminish the area of friction and conflict because in all these States, no matter what the solution is, you have to continue to live with your neighbours. And the more friction there is in the solution, that friction will spill over and will remain over the years. Therefore, it is not only enough to decide what is the right solution but also to get that solution accepted by the people concerned. Otherwise, especially as the political parties do not cooperate, even though it may be a good and just solution, you open, you keep the loopholes for further friction alive. The key to any harmonious solution lies in agreement amongst the States, and not in any imposition from above. And that has been our desire and our effort to bring about some kind of an agreement. Or some of these issues–hon. Members are aware—there is sometimes no accord even within the same party. The parties get divided on these regional and other issues and every party gets divided. Now if we could solve the problem amongst ourselves, if each party could solve it, then the whole question would be solved in no time at all. Even here in the two Houses we have found that while one Member has stated one point of view here, another Member of the same party has pressed another point of view in the other House. So we have to look at these matters from the long-term point of view. In the same way, sometimes if a person is Chief Minister of a State, he wants to go all out to get more powers for the State. Now knowing the policies of some of these Governments, we know that had they been at all connected with the Centre, they would have gone all out for far greater powers for the Centre.

Reference was also made to our foreign policy and I believe certain rather unfair and unwarranted allegations were made about our being in one particular camp and so on. This I would like to deny most strongly. India has stood for taking an independent view on all matters. The broad elements of our policy were indicated by the President, namely, that we stand for international peace and cooperation, we stand for the reduction of tension in areas which still have conflict and tension, and we believe in building understanding with the other peoples of the world.

There was some talk here, I believe the hon. Member, Shri Chagla, spoke of the dangers to our system. His concern arises from a genuine interest in the stability of our system. But I feel that he is taking too pessimistic a view. We have had these gloomy forecasts time and again about elections, about one thing or another. But the people have belied them. It is not that everything is all right. The people do get excited, people do wrong things. But by and large, I think our democracy is becoming more mature and people are finding their feet. And I would not be over-obsessed with this concept of instability. I would appeal to the House not to underestimate the vitality and the resilience of our people and

our system and their capacity to absorb the tumults of change. Obviously there are new trends. Not only are there new trends in our country, but there are new trends in the entire world. But I think that our system has displayed its strength and I feel that the people of India–they may make experiments, they may make mistakes–are aware of their basic rights and I think that they will see that the rights, that democracy gives them and our system gives them, will always be preserved. I do not think that if some little thing is going wrong at this moment, we should immediately try to escape into finding another system because that system will not have fewer problems. It might have different types of problems, but the number of problems will not be less; it may well be more. These are all questions in which whatever our differing views on economic matters or other matters may be, we should atleast isolate certain matters which are of national concern and work together for their solution. I certainly hope that in this session of Parliament we will get this co operation and we will be able to get together on many of these things. I would like to thank the hon. Members for the valuable contribution which they made...

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and I hope that the Members who have put in amendments will withdraw them. Thank you.

A Synoptic View of Government Policies*

Mr. Speaker Sir, in our method of parliamentary working, this debate is the annual occasion to discuss the entire field of Government's organised activities as outlined in the President's Address. Some of the significant and important points have already been discussed at considerable length in the debate on the motion of no-confidence, which we had just a few days ago. History may not repeat itself, but historians do and so do parliamentarians. So, some of the points which I am going to mention will naturally not be nobel, because the problems are the same and party attitudes are also the same.

This time, the number of amendments is even more than the total membership of the House and therefore, it will obviously not be possible to deal with them all.

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The major points which dominated the discussion naturally concern themselves with the improvements in agriculture and industry. I spoke on this only a few days ago and in a few days, my colleague, the Deputy Prime Minister, will indicate the steps which have been taken and which contributed to the arresting of the price spiral. The progress in the agricultural field has been striking. I do not know if the hon. Members can deny the improvement during 1967-68, which raised the national income by 9.1 per cent over the previous year. The index of industrial production for the first nine months of 1968 stands at 159.3, which is 5.6 per cent higher than the figure for the same period in 1967.

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Surely our balance of payments is better than it was last year. Our exports have gone up and our imports have come down. This is not a guess-work. It is a question of facts. My hon. friend opposite just now spoke of Indra Bhagvan. I believe yesterday also some hon. Member said so. Nobody is denying that a good monsoon has made a world of difference. At the same time, we cannot deny that there was a very serious drought before that and that this drought had very wide repercussions in all spheres of national life, in agriculture as well as in industry. There is no doubt that the good monsoon has helped, but Government was responsible, as the hon. Member Shri Mahadeva Prasad remarked, for the new agricultural strategy, and it was the impact of those new programmes which enabled many of our farmers to take full advantage of the rains. The agricultural production did go over even the peak reached earlier when the rains were normal. As I have said on

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *L.S. Deb.*, 26 February, 1969, cc. 139-53.

previous occasions, it was the will and hard work of the Indian peasants which enabled them to reap this rich harvest and it would not be fair to ignore their contribution to it.

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Certainly I am glad the hon. Member has reminded me*. I have not forgotten them. On previous occasions I have mentioned that it was the hard work, the perseverance, the imagination of our scientists and our engineers and the others involved in the various institutes, in extension work and so on which made this possible.

No body claims that there are not some areas of concern. Many hon. Members yesterday said that the President had painted a very rosy picture. But if you read the Address carefully, you will find that he has drawn attention to the areas of concern or the areas where we are not satisfied with development or which pose very serious problems.

The President did point out that the demand for the products of some industries in the machine building sector, for instance, continues to be inadequate as compared to capacity. We fully realise this and I think my colleagues who are concerned with these ministries have also drawn attention to the fact that there is considerable scope for improvement in management and other matters concerning both public and private enterprises. None of this is denied or sought to be hidden or glossed over in any way. Continuous efforts are being made to reassess, to review and to improve the situation.

As hon. Members know, agriculture has been accorded top priority in our Plan and there is consensus on the need for extending irrigation to many parts of the country. Mention has been made of Rajasthan, of Telengana, of Rayalaseema and so on. There are other areas in north-Mysore, in Uttar Pradesh, in Bihar. Practically in every State there are areas which are in need of irrigation. A high-power commission will go into the needs and programmes in the light of the development which has been taking place in the past years.

Many times one hears that although it is twenty years since we are free, people are still poor, poverty is still there. Obviously, Sir, there is poverty. I do not know how anybody could have imagined that poverty could possibly be wiped out in a period of twenty years (*Interruptions*). No country of this size and population with the problems which we faced has done this (*Interruptions*). As I have said on a previous occasion, the situation has improved in some respects and in other respects because of increase in population and other problems and difficulties remain.

We are certainly not fully self-sufficient yet. Some hon. Member said that we claim to be self-sufficient and yet we are importing. We do not claim to be fully self-sufficient but we do claim that we are going towards self-sufficiency, and while we are nearer to self-sufficiency in wheat, we have some way to go with regard to rice (*Interruptions*). I am not yielding at all. Mention was also made with regard to dry farming. We are duly conscious of the areas which are still not covered by irrigation and progressive steps are being taken to extend to them various agricultural practices. New varieties of seeds and

* Responding to Shri S. Kundu's remark, "Also our engineers and scientists were responsible".

other forms of more intensified cultivation in dry areas are under way and research work on varieties of seeds suitable for dry areas is in progress.

There is also the question of flood control. I am told the total area liable to floods is estimated at 16 million hectares.

The average annual area affected by floods from 1953 to 1967 was 6 million hectares, of which the area under crops, was about 2 million hectares. At the end of the Third Plan over 7,000 kilometres of new embankments have been constructed, over 8,700 kilometres of drainage channels have been constructed, 164 town protection schemes were completed and over 4,500 villages were raised above flood level. As a result, nearly 5.2 million hectares of land which was usually subjected to flood damage has been given reasonable protection and during the past three years another one million hectares have been covered under the programme, making a total of 6.2 million hectares.

The question of land reforms has come up here many times. There is legislation for the abolition of intermediaries, for ceiling on holdings, security of tenure and consolidation of holdings in most of the States. However, we are deeply aware of the need for a comprehensive look at the whole problem and the need for land reforms and I do sincerely hope that every State will consider this matter.

As I said, we have been plagued by flood and drought simultaneously in one part of the country or another. These severe and serious problems have received prompt attention of the Government and help has been given in whatever way possible. I believe a statement has been laid on the Table on the drought situation in various States and the steps taken to tackle it.

For West Bengal a total assistance of Rs. 23.73 crores has been sanctioned of which Rs. 17.50 crores has already been released; as the assistance is utilized more is provided. Similarly, for Rajasthan Rs. 8.96 crores has already been agreed to by Central team. Then another team of experts is likely to visit the State next month to re-assess the situation and to make further recommendations of the needs.

In this period the railways have provided various concessions and facilities and have done a tremendous job in moving food and fodder. Even today, under various programmes, about 1.25 lakhs of persons, mostly children, expectant mothers and others are being fed daily and this number is expected to rise to 2.5 lakhs per day.

Another problem which is one of great concerns to the Government and the people is that of unemployment. The Fourth Plan is not an isolated plan; it addresses itself to all major national questions. It is only through economic progress that we can solve the unemployment question, which is faced even by the advanced countries today. Naturally, we have special problems because of the vast size and the rapidly growing population of our country.

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The Planning Commission, as the hon. Members know, has appointed an expert committee which will make recommendations on the various aspects regarding

employment, unemployment and under-employment, both in the rural and urban areas, as also on the methods of estimating the labour force and employment potential. The report is expected by the middle of this year. This problem must be tackled both from short-term point of view as well as long–term point of view, because the addition to the labour force is faster than the growth of work opportunities.

Employment in the organised sector increased from 12.1 million at the end of 1960-61 to 16.2 million at the end of 1965-66. It is a rise of about 34 per cent and an annual average growth rate of 6.8 per cent in the Third Plan period.

In various sectors, growth in the percentage of employment went up appreciably. In trade and commerce, it went up by 112 per cent between 1961 and 1968; in power and supplies it went up by 53.8 per cent; in the manufacturing sector it went up by 31 per cent; in agriculture and related sectors it went up by 29.4 per cent. In the public sector alone employment rose from 5.2 million in 1956 to nearly twice that figure, that is, to 9.8 million last year. But no one denies the problem. And some aspects of it, such as the problem of the educated unemployed, specially of engineers, is causing us immediate and grave concern.

Whether one takes the question of unemployment or the equally important problem of regional disparities, disparities between one State and another or within a State, to which some hon. Members have referred, the answer lies in the approach of an integrated, comprehensive plan for the speediest possible growth of the economy as a whole.

The other day an hon. Member talked of the problem of literacy. I believe that an amendment has also been moved on this subject. This is an important problem and we attach importance to this. We also realise that a great deal has to be done and that much ground still remains to be covered. But it would not be fair to overlook what has been achieved in this field.

The number of literates in the country has nearly doubled in the first decade of planned development, rising from 55.3 million to 106 million. The most significant fact, however, was that the low percentage of 16.6 per cent rose to 24 per cent during this period, in spite of the colossal increase in population. More recent projections suggest that the current percentage is around 30 and figure of literates is 152 million or so.

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I think, our people had the basic wisdom but now it is a question of the actual knowledge of certain matters. Whether you go into the villages or anywhere else you see the change and even people who are not able to read and write are very much aware not only of their problems but also of their needs and what should be done; also, when they are helped, how to use that help. Their whole attitude of resignation, apathy, helplessness is changing.

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It is certainly to the credit of the people and I am saying so*.

The question of Harijans, Tribals and other underprivileged people is a matter which is constantly before us. It is also a very serious problem. Government is certainly not indifferent. We have had numerous debates on this matter. Much has been done in the past years. Very concentrated effort and programmes are being undertaken to see how this situation can be improved.

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The welfare of all these people is not only an article of faith for us but also an imperative necessity for the development and progress of the country. A considerable amount of work has been done but it is nothing as compared to what remains to be done. In many ways the people who indulge in some of the atrocities which have taken place or the attitudes of mind which they display are similar to the race problem which we see in other places. There is a feeling that some people are superior or some people are inferior. We all know there is no such thing as a backward caste and that if any group has been backward, it is only because it has not had the opportunity of education or other knowledge and training which could help it to go ahead.

The recent attacks upon the Harijans wherever they may have taken place are a blot on the whole nation. Constitutional safeguards do exist. But we have not been able to change the hearts or the mental attitudes of many of our citizens. This is where we must all join in creating the right sort of social climate.

We have already debated the question of the Shiv Sena. All groups have condemned such acts, such attitude and such bodies in the strongest possible terms.

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Government action alone in this is no solution. All parties must join together and put an end to the activities of such organisations which can only result in disrupting national unity and creating hatred and bitterness between one Indian and another.

We all listen to Acharyaji with great respect. He talked of law and order. Of course, it is Government's responsibility and Government cannot evade that responsibility. But all these are not merely law and order problems. People do get emotionally involved in issues and emotions cannot always be subdued by a big stick. That is why all responsible persons must come to the conclusion that no matter how strongly they feel on any specific issue, they shall not indulge in violence, they shall not allow other people to indulge in violence specially, people with whom they may be allied on other fronts.

Acharyaji has also taken exception to the word emotional integration. I am not at all attached to this word. Provided that all feel and act as Indians and are willing to co-exist

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* Responding to Shri S. Kundu's remark, "It goes to the credit of the people and not of the Government".

and be good neighbours to other Indians regardless of different faiths, different languages, different customs, it does not matter what words are used to describe our integration, or even if you want to change that word integration.

My hon. friend, Prof. Ranga referred to the Integration Council. We cannot always agree on all points and, indeed, we differ very much with his party on many points.

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Nor can we expect quick results from such a Council. But, I think it was remarkable that so many different parties could sit together and agree even on some points. I know that immediately we did not achieve the result which we would have wished for. But this does not mean we can give up. We must find the solutions. I hope Prof. Ranga's party and the S.S.P. will reconsider their attitude, because their staying away does not help and, if their voice is also heard, may be, it would be a little easier to implement our decisions and to take along more of the people with us on these issues.

Several hon. Members have referred to inter-State questions, river and border disputes. The M.Ps of various parties who represent Andhra Pradesh or who represent Mysore have come to me and, on earlier occasions, the M.Ps from Maharashtra and other groups have also been to me. It is agreed that the Krishna-Godavari question should be referred to arbitration. But some details about jurisdiction, terms of reference and so on are still being worked out.

A reference was also made to another matter, that is, the Maharashtra border dispute. This is an economic and political matter which has acquired emotional overtones. I cannot say much on this occasion nor would it be right to pre-judge the final outcome here. But, as I said earlier, we should emphasize that the matter be approached by all concerned in a cool and level-headed manner, in a spirit of cooperation, tolerance and give-and-take. Government cannot yield to pressure or ultimatums. We have to help emotions to cool down before lasting solutions can be found to such very complex problems. Some steps were contemplated soon after the mid-term poll and I had hoped to have talks with the two Chief Ministers, but then the events in Bombay intervened. Whatever decision is taken, we must be concerned about the possible trail of bitterness which it may leave behind. If there is delay or if we are consulting more people, it is merely to try and avoid this trial of bitterness and hatred which some of these problems leave behind....

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The basic point is that we must live together. No State can change its geographical position and say, 'I can choose other neighbours'. Since we must live together, we have to find a basis on which there can be good neighbourly relations and solutions which will help towards creating such a relationship. The key to harmony is not imposition but agreement.

Much was said on the results of the mid-term poll. I have talked on this earlier and I have no intention of saying much about it again. I would like to welcome the Governments

in West Bengal and Punjab. To these States we shall give the fullest consideration and cooperation. We must at all times realise that the whole is greater than the part, and that the welfare and prosperity of the Indian people and the nation should be the objective of all of us, regardless of our party affiliations. I hope that each State Government, regardless of what party or parties it may be composed of, keeps in mind that, while it is responsible for the governance of one State, that State is only one part of this great country, and it is our duty in the Centre as well as in the States to uphold and foster the unity of the nation as well as any special identity of the States. In fact, there is great need that whichever State a particular person may be born in–I have said this before, but I would like to say again–he should be able to work and to prosper in any other State. All our far-sighted educationists have stressed it as important that India should be one intellectual entity just as it is one economic common market. This is also the underlying reason for having a unified judiciary and unified All-India Services. They really represent an apparatus in the nature of a joint partnership of the Union and the States, and must be preserved and fostered as such....

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We attach... importance to the problems of young people. The younger generation has new urges, new demands, here as well as elsewhere in the world. The problem is not merely one of jobs or of security or insecurity although that does exist; it is a question of a change of outlook. New knowledge, new opportunities, new freedoms, are coming their way. Contact with the outside world is also influencing the situation. They have tremendous energy—in fact, I would even say, there is an 'explosion of energy'—and they have a desire to forge new paths, they then shall desire to grope towards a future which has meaning for them.

Government are fully aware of these factors, and we want our Ministry of Education to give special attention to youth services and to think of follow-up measures. But here too there is an area of governmental responsibility but an equally large area for professors, for political leaders, for the non-political elite, for parents and for the community at large to share the responsibility and to find ways of bridging this generation gap. Just as in some of the border and other disputes all parties join on a particular issue, this is something in which all of one generation are on one side of the bridge and the younger generation is on the other side of the bridge. How to have a better understanding of the problem is something that we can work out...

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Many amendments have been proposed seeking to draw attention to certain alleged failures of foreign policy. I believe that the policy which we have been pursuing during the last two decades and more represents a national consensus. Its basic structure has found wide acceptance in the country.

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In the light of changing circumstances in the world, it has served our national interests.

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This is perhaps the reason why there is no attempt on the part of the Opposition to elaborate upon an alternative structure of principles on which our foreign policy could rest. The attack was more by implication than in the nature of a frontal one. There will probably be occasions to go into the details of foreign policy during this budget session. However, I should like to touch briefly on a subject which is naturally of deep concern to us all. I refer to the question of security. On what does our security depend ?

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Obviously, no one can defend this huge country with its 500 million people unless the people themselves are ready and willing to lay down their lives for the defence of their Motherland. Our security, therefore, depends in the first instance, on the patriotism and the spirit of self–sacrifice of the people as a whole.

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The validity of this proposition cannot be challenged. No nation can effectively bear arms unless its citizens have the spirit to bear arms. The second essential element in our security is the industrial and economic strength of the country. Without such strength, we will be condemned to live on borrowed strength, and this borrowing can be done temporarily but it cannot be a principle of foreign policy. We have seen that military alliances had not succeeded in guaranteeing security. Even countries covered by military alliances today feel insecure. There is a questioning of the principles on which these alliance were brought about at the height of the cold war. Each country today realises that it must build its own economic strength if it wishes to safeguard its security. This is precisely what we have been doing. Finally, our security depends on the strength, the morale, the fighting efficiency and the patriotism of our Armed Forces. Let us not be diverted from the prime necessity of increasing the fighting efficiency of our conventional Armed Forces.

This is what we have been endeavouring to do...(*Interruptions*).

There was reference to nuclear power, especially since it is possessed by one of our next door neighbours. Let us not be panicky about it; let us not undermine the growth of our economy by diverting resources towards that end....(*Interruptions*).

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I should like to say something about the criticism that this country is isolated and forlorn. Some hon. Members seem to take delight in self-humiliation. The fact however remains that our country is held in high regard by the world and we continue to play our role in important international organizations and forums. I think it is only those who lack confidence either in themselves or in the country indulge in denigrating the country. If we

are friendless, it would be interesting to hear from the hon. Members which country they consider does have friends. The world situation today is in an extremely fluid state.

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It has been, it is more so now. At one time countries had well-defined positions*. Today they do not. Today, many of the alliances have blurred and there are many new factors which have arisen in all parts of the world. There is friction not only between one State and another but also within almost every country. This is true not only of developing countries but even of the so-called advanced countries. Therefore, I should ask the movers of the various amendments to withdraw them. Many of the amendments emanate from the mistaken notion that the President's Address should refer to each and every act of the Government... (*Interruptions*). It can only deal with the general outlook and the policy of the Government. An objective reading of the Address should provide optimism and not gloom. I should urge on the critics of the Government to shed their chronic pessimism and become constructive participants in working for the continued progress and prosperity of our country. I am aware that many gaps have to be filled and many difficulties have to be solved. Many challenges have to be met and we have a long way to go. But I am comforted by the thought that we are on the right path.... (*Interruptions*.)

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My hon. friend would certainly like to see a change in our path and he would like us to go along his path**. The hon. friends on the other side, of the opposition, would like us to change our path and go in an entirely opposite direction.... (*Interruptions*). The question today is this : at a time when in different States there are Governments with entirely different points of view, the major question is how all of them can stand together. Whether we can find areas of agreement and attempt to increase those areas. We cannot possibly agree on all questions. I may agree on one point with Prof. Ranga and on another point with another party. Still, we shall obviously have many differences. That is why we are in different parties, otherwise there would not be so many parties. There would have been just one party.

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I am; I naturally belong to a party and I am also committed to a particular programme and a particular policy***. We shall follow that programme and that policy. We have to follow a path, which may not be fully agreeable to hon. Members here or fully agreeable to hon. Members there. That by itself shows that one path is trying to take the majority of the people along, because it is finding disfavour with those who are at the two extremes. This is the only way in which we can go ahead and work hard to solve our many problems and bring a better life to our people. Therefore, I hope that the entire House will support the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address.

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* Responding to Shri Ranga's remark, "It has been".

** Responding to Shri Nambiar's observation, "You are on a very wrong path; you should change it".

*** Replying to Shri Ranga's remark, "She has to be the Prime Minister of a party".

Economic Growth and Political Evolution*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, as many hon. Members have remarked, the President's Address this year has been much more than a mere formal address. It is not a mere outline of the business before this particular session or during the year. Actually, it is an urgent summons to the tasks which await us as we enter one new decade after completing another. In fact, it is something even more than this. It marks the transition from one definite stage in our economic development and political evolution to the beginning of another.

Anyone who views modern Indian history with comprehension and a sense of fairness, anyone who is at all conversant with the processes of economic development, knows that today the country is economically and politically stronger than it was before, and also more capable of facing the challenges with which it is confronted. In fact, at no time has there been more enthusiasm and greater self-confidence in the people of India, a greater expectation of change, and also, I would say, a greater capacity to bring about this change.

The Leader of the Opposition**, Sir, has used many alliterative adjectives. He has called the Address, if I remember his words aright, dull, dry and so on.

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It is human, Sir, to see the world in one's own image. The trouble with the Leader of the Opposition and his party is, as one hon. Member said just now, that they have ceased to listen to the voice of the people. They have ceased to notice the urge and the fervour, which is so evident not only to our own countrymen, but also to the many people who have been visiting us from countries from all parts of the globe in recent months. But they, Sir, have unfortunately fallen out of step and got so far behind that they are under the illusion that there is no progress at all. The hon. Member, Shri Mishra, has alleged that we are, or perhaps I am, obsessed with the idea of toppling State Governments. I presume he has in mind Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Now, Sir, Bihar is his home State. I do not know whether he has some grievance against the ending of the Governor's rule there, because that is the only Government that was toppled in Bihar, and if I remember aright, only some little while ago I was being urged by some of the same people to end the Governor's rule as soon as possible. Now the other charge on which he spent some considerable time was that it was my tours which brought about the fall of the Uttar Pradesh Government. This charge, as I have said during those tours and afterwards, is entirely baseless. My visits to

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *R.S. Deb.*, 2 March, 1970, cc. 244-65.

** Shri S.N. Mishra.

the U.P. were undertaken to acquaint myself with the problems of Uttar Pradesh and also to counter-act the accusation made, very loudly and often, there that the Centre and more particularly the Prime Minister and also the two preceding Prime Ministers had been neglecting it. Now, one cannot simultaneously complain that the Prime Minister is neglecting U.P. and also that the Prime Minister is giving attention to U.P. You have to make up your mind which out of the two you mean. My purpose in going whether to U.P. or any other State is to tell the people about the policies of the Government generally and especially with regard to that particular State and I did tell the people of U.P. that while it is true that the State does not get all that it expects from the Centre this happens to be true of all other States as well and also with regard to the Central Ministries; not that they do not get it from the Centre because they are in the Centre but they do not get all that they ask from the Planning Commission or the Finance Ministry. As far as U.P. is concerned more than half the expense on the development plans of that State has throughout come from the Centre. Admittedly this is not sufficient to meet the needs of the State, which is one of the most economically backward in the entire country. That is why very much more has to be done not only by the Government of India but also by the State Government. But the picture that is being painted here, if I may use the word, was rather a romantic one which was perhaps because of the nature of the hon. Leader of the Opposition sitting opposite, I do not know what picture was conjured up before the other Members....

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But anybody who did not know that situation and who was listening to him might have got away with the impression that from the helicopter in which I was flying, I was busy shooting down all the politicians who were opposed to me. The only reply that I can make to this is if there was anybody who toppled the previous Government there it was the leader of that Government himself.

One of the amendments moved speaks of totalitarian methods. That is indeed a most extraordinary statement and it shows a certain lack of knowledge of how totalitarian Governments have acted in the past or, where they exist today, are acting today. I think it is crystal clear not only from my words but from my actions that I stand for democracy, unqualified and unchallenged democracy, in the country as a whole, in every State and within every party of our country. Any doctrine or system which encourages a few to think that they are better than the people at large and that they can order about the people at large is repugnant. One has only to see what is happening to dictatorships around the world to know that this system is dangerous and self-defeating even in the short run, to say nothing of the longer run. After the fourth general elections hon. Members are aware that I was the first to proclaim unhesitatingly that the Central Government would respect the will of the people and would extend their full cooperation to all the State Governments which were established after the elections and we have given our best cooperation to all State Governments, whatever their political complexion. In fact, some of the people who talk of democracy in this hon. House at the same time would like us to change our attitude with regard to those parties with whom they do not happen to agree. This is a strange

description of democracy. Some State Governments have been able to appreciate our help, others do not say so openly. That is because every State Government needs a bogeyman on whom they can transfer the responsibility for their own shortcomings and their genuine difficulties. Who can be more convenient than the Central Government? But this has not deflected us from our path of giving constructive–often one-sided–cooperation to all State Governments. Had we not followed this policy, the foundation of our Republic and of our Union would have been weakened after the swift political changes of the last few years.

Another hon. Member, Shri Dahyabhai Patel, spoke of the needs of Gujarat. In the past years, Shri Patel used to roam about during such a debate, all over the world, if I may put it that way, from China to Peru but this time he restricted his field to merely Gujarat and Taiwan. I do not know whether he has found some link or affinity between the two. He has been pleased to observe that the notes which the Chief Minister of Gujarat gave to me last month, when I went to Ahmedabad, ably summed up what Shri Patel himself has been saying for years.

Now, Sir, the notes contain certain legitimate demands but there are also certain proposals which would be extremely difficult to accept. If I may give an example, there was a demand for a steel mill there. Now I do not have to go into steel economics here, but the setting up of a steel mill, thousands of miles away from any source of iron ore or coal would certainly make steel very costly and I doubt if it is a proposal which could be acceptable to any Government.

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A complaint was also made that we are going slow with regard to oil exploration in Gujarat. This is a most unjust complaint. The hon. Minister is sitting here and I have no doubt that he has spoken on this matter earlier and the House is aware of the detailed negotiations in regard to offshore drilling along the coast of Gujarat. I believe that the first deep sea operation should start any day now. As the President's Address has rightly observed, oil is next only to steel in taking us nearer to self-reliance.

The hon. Shri M. P. Bhargava has rightly cautioned the Members of this House against speaking loosely about the Supreme Court. Just now in my presence also many Members have touched upon this subject. Now, I do not think anyone in this House or even outside would like the name of the Supreme Court to be brought up lightly. After all, it is well recognised that one of the pillars of our democracy is the independent judiciary. Accusations have been made that I made disparaging remarks about the Supreme Court after its judgment on bank nationalisation. May I make it very clear that I have done no such thing? On the contrary, I stressed the importance of not saying anything without a full study of the Supreme Court judgment which at that time I had not seen and since then I have not spoken about that matter at all.

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However, I did refer to the difficulties in the path of progress. This is a self-evident statement. Many Bills of reform and Acts of legislation which were meant to serve the

cause of progress have met with setbacks. Many of our land reform Acts have been taken to the Courts and have been invalidated either in part or in full, but we went back to the Legislature and to the Constitution and took the necessary remedial measures. This has happened in other countries also to which reference has been made by several hon. Members. No human institution is infallible. Those familiar with the constitutional history of the United States must have heard of the celebrated Dred Scott decision, when the US Supreme Court declared that slavery was legal and that the anti-slavery legislation passed by a State was *ultra vires* of the US Constitution, but within a few years the US Constitution itself was also changed. I do not want to go into the history of the New Deal and the conflicts which arose between the Legislature and the judiciary in the USA and the very open and forthright statements which the then President of the US made about their own judiciary. All organs of the Government are subject to the same historical forces and have to be receptive to the same needs and compulsions in evolving a social order. There is in Parliament and outside a widespread feeling that Parliament should not be divested of the power to amend the Constitution. I believe all political parties, with the expected exceptions, are in favour of Parliament having the power to make laws for the country, especially in regard to social justice and social progress. The Nath Pai Bill seeks to remove any doubts that might have arisen about the competence of Parliament as a result of the judgement of the Supreme Court in the case of Golaknath *vs* the State of Punjab.

Some hon. Members–in fact, many hon. Members–have spoken of the increasing violence in West Bengal and other parts of the country. In his Address the President has expressed concern at the continuing resort to violence by certain extremist political groups which pursue disruptive aims. Violence feeds violence, whatever be its origin, whether it is communal, regional or economically or politically motivated. I do not think that any kind of violence can be justified at any time, but this is a problem which needs the concerted efforts of all sections of society. We must strengthen the fibre of our people to resist violence. I was a little surprised to hear one hon. Member making rather contradictory statements. While, on the one hand, we should not interfere with the Government of Bengal, on the other hand, we should do something about what is happening there. Now, Sir, it is not possible to do both. In this sort of situation the responsibility is of the State Government. It is up to the parties forming the Government there not only to take action themselves, but also to create the type of public opinion which will not stand for this kind of action, this kind of taking the law in their own hands by a few people, causing not only loss of life and other harm, but disrupting the daily life of the majority of the people. It is only by doing this that disruptive and anarchical groups can be made to realise that violence does not pay.

I should like to turn now to the field of economic development. My hon. friend opposite sought to convey the impression that the economic outlook is not bright. Shri Dahyabhai Patel, not surprisingly said that the progress which the President has depicted, was illusory. On the other hand, many hon. Members have pointed out the opposite. Now, the President's Address has tried to set out only the salient facts of our progress and has indicated the trends in the immediate future. The progress in agriculture is there for all to see. I do not exaggerate this progress and I have been specially careful in my speeches to avoid the

phrase 'green revolution'. The progress is there and cannot be denied. The new programme involving the package of improved agricultural techniques based on the use of high-yielding varieties of seeds, intensive application of fertilisers and extension of irrigation facilities, has made a definite impact on the rural economy. Industrial production also has picked up significantly. Trends in production in the current year so far point to an increase of more than 7 per cent. There is no doubt that the economy is now much better poised for growth than ever before.

There was also reference, at some length, to the present trends in price, but may I request hon. Members to look at the situation on the proper perspective ? Can it be denied that 1968 was characterised by a considerable degree of price stability ? It is true that since the middle of November, 1969, prices have been under pressure. This is due mainly to the downward revision in the crop estimates of cotton and groundnut and the delay of winter rains in many parts of the country. Between November 1969 and February this year there was a contra-seasonal rise in prices, but over the last one month the position has again become stable because of a number of measures taken by Government and the Reserve Bank. In the last few weeks, while the Reserve Bank has taken a number of measures to tighten its credit control over bank advances against commodities which are subject to demand and price pressures, Government has been building up a sufficient buffer-stock. Foodgrains, as we all know, play a very important part in influencing price trends. Production in the current year, I am told, may be of the order of 100 million tonnes. By the end of this month the total stock with the Centre and States should be about 4·5 million tonnes. We are thus better placed now to influence the prices of foodgrains. However, there is no doubt that Government will continue to be vigilant. We know that a rise in prices causes considerable hardship to people, particularly the poorer sections of society, but some critics are raising the bogey of prices because they want outlays in the public sector to be kept down. They do not reckon with the heavy toll which a reduction in public sector outlay takes in terms of increased unemployment and economic stagnation. We have, therefore, to keep in view the objectives of growth and stability in formulating our economic strategy.

Now, Sir, I share the concern expressed by many hon. Members regarding unemployment. I have spoken on this matter on many occasions and the President has also mentioned it. I have mentioned it in my Budget speech. I think some hon. Members tried to quantify this problem of educated unemployed by referring to a 77 per cent increase in unemployment. Now, reference has also been made to inequalities of income. I have said on previous occasions that the two problems, *i.e.*, unemployment and economic inequalities, are not separate but very closely interlinked. The concept of economic equality itself should be raised from the level of the income redistribution of existing wealth or incomes to an altogether different plane. We aim at an equitable distribution of income earning opportunities. It is only in this way that we can harmonise the two important objectives of augmentation of production and enlargement of employment opportunities. I should also like to say that a solution to the unemployment problem has to be found within the framework of the Plan. There cannot be a separate or independent solution, and looked at in this way by far the most effective remedy for unemployment is the vigorous implementation of the Plan. Our labour force is growing at the rate of 2.5 per cent per

year. An annual growth rate of anything less than 5 to 6 per cent will therefore prove inadequate to provide opportunities for the absorption of this growing work force. Therefore, the need is to step up the outlay on the Plan and to raise the rate of investment. This is what Government is trying to do. All those who are earnest about tackling this major problem should support the efforts to raise the level of Plan outlay. In the coming financial year we are enlarging it of the order roughly of Rs. 400 crores in the States' and the Central Plans together. This is not an insignificant increase and it will contribute materially to a faster tempo of development and creation of more job opportunities. It is also necessary to impart a conscious employment-bias to our development programmes. The new Budget has made special provision for programmes such as those relating to rural works and small farmers, land reclamation and improvement, renovation of minor irrigation works, proper maintenance of irrigation channels, construction of roads linking the villages with marketing centres, etc. All these could be and should be undertaken as part of the programme and in their totality they will make, as I said earlier, a significant contribution to rural development as also to the generation of additional employment. The details of some of these programmes have been given in the brochure entitled "Growth with Social Justice" circulated along with other Budget documents.

Growth with social justice is particularly relevant to our industrial development. The new industrial licensing policy keeps this objective in view. Government have tried to remove the impediments to a fast rate of growth in the industrial sector, while providing safeguards against the concentration of economic power and monopolistic trends.The raising of the limit for industrial licensing is intended to broaden the base on which our industrial structure must stand.

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It will provide opportunities to small and medium entrepreneurs. Credit policies are also being reoriented so as to assist small and medium entrepreneurs, and I know that this will make a difference.

Now, Sir there has been a lot of noise here and elsewhere with regard to the Goa Fertilizer Project, I am afraid that some of this criticism is rather ill-informed. As perhaps the hon. Minister has said, this project was before the Government since 1964. Approval was given and a firm licence was issued in December, 1966. The requisite clearance for financial assistance from some international agencies and the Cooly Fund was also given some time ago. But towards the end of December, 1969, the Government were called upon to take a view only on two limited points. One was what should be the condition which the public financial institutions might stipulate before underwriting the public issue of shares by the company; and the second was whether the Government should agree to a further small increase in the drawal of loan assistance from the Cooly Funds to match certain changes in the pattern of financing of the project. So far as the first issue is concerned, Government have ensured two seats on the Board of Management. Regarding the second, having already agreed to a loan of Rs. 18·5 crores from the Cooly Funds, Government could not have taken serious objection to a further drawal of Rs. 3 crores. There is no doubt that our preference is and will remain to have such projects in the public sector. In

fact, in the crucial field of fertilizer production, the public sector already occupies a commanding position. We have 8 plants in actual production with a capacity of 0·65 million tonnes; 7 plants with a total capacity of 1.03 million tonnes, these are in different stages of actual implementation. Besides, 7 plants, including 3 coal-based plants, have been allotted to the public sector which, when implemented, will result in additional capacity of 1.17 million tonnes. As against this, there are only 5 plants in the private Sector now in production with a capacity of 0.43 million tonnes, and the Goa plant will mean an addition of only 0.17 million tonnes. Letters of intent have been given to a few other projects, but at this stage it is doubtful whether they will come up as on previous occasions many of these have not materialised because of the difficulties relating to finance, feed-stocks and other problems which remain unresolved.

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There is continuing discussion on nationalisation. I am not afraid of nationalisation, nor do I believe that it is an answer to all our difficulties. I think that any proposal for nationalisation should be subjected to two tests.

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Firstly, we should see whether it is necessary from the point of view of enabling the public sector to occupy a key position in the economy and, secondly, whether it does further our social objectives.

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Our approach must be realistic and practical. At any moment if any privately-owned industry is operating against the national interest or is impeding social progress, we should not hesitate to take it over. At the present moment, our priority is the acceleration of development so that the problems of unemployment and inequalities are solved, and this calls for not only the right policy but unremitting hard work, higher savings and greater investment. The emphasis should, therefore, be on the flow of the scarce public capital into new areas of production. The economic battle which lies ahead requires many weapons in our armoury and nationalisation is only one of these weapons, and it is one which should be used judiciously and with great care. It is against this background that I would urge upon the hon. Members to consider the various suggestions which have been made either during the course of the debate or in the amendments for the nationalisation of the different sectors of the economy.

The problem of Centre-State relations, more particularly financial relations, has also been raised now as it has been in every debate for quite a long time. Various issues pertaining to this problem have been debated in different forums, in Parliament and also in the National Development Council. They have also been studied in depth by expert bodies such as the Planning Commission and the Administrative Reforms Commission. I do not think that there is any conflict between the interests of the States and the Centre. Both are charged with the responsibility of promoting the good of the people in the fields respectively assigned to them. Some sources of revenue are assigned to the Centre under

the Constitution and these are a little more elastic than those allocated to the States. Let us look into this matter. If our objective of common citizenship and the free movement of goods and service within the country is to be assured, is it possible for sources such as income-tax or excise duty or customs to be assigned to a unit smaller than the Union Government ? The founding fathers of our Constitution, therefore, wisely assigned these revenues to the Union. At the same time, they did realise that the needs of the States which were responsible for such vital functions as law and order, education, public health, would be constantly growing with development. So they laid down a scheme for the sharing of the resources of the Centre with the States and also provided for a periodical review through an independent body, namely, the Finance Commission. As far as I know, in none of the older federations is there a body comparable to our Finance Commission. The resources transferred from the Centre to the States in accordance with the recommendations of the Finance Commission have steadily grown. The amount transferred to the States under the Award of the Finance Commission in the First Plan period was Rs. 386 crores. But it is estimated to be Rs. 4,066 crores during the Fourth Plan period. Over and above this, the Centre has also been providing assistance for the implementation of the States Plans and for some of the weaker States, the Central assistance will be as much as 90 per cent and even more of the total size of their Plans.

The States have also considerable latitude in drawing up their programmes with reference to the local problems. Central assistance is now being provided in the form of block loans and block grants in accordance with the decisions which have been reached jointly by the States in the National Development Council. The problem now is to ensure how these State programmes will fit into the national framework and fulfil our basic objectives.

As hon. Members know, the Central Government is constantly asked what it is doing for the backward classes, the backward regions and for items such as rural water supply, etc. Now, how is the Centre to discharge those responsibilities unless it has certain sanctions at its disposal ? Complaints are also made that a large number of villages are still without drinking water. Now, if you look at the overall provision for drinking water supply, it is not inadequate in our Plan. And I feel that even with the existing provision, substantial impact can be made on this problem. But it is necessary to ensure that funds meant for rural water supply and for the development of backward areas are not diverted to any other purpose. Unfortunately, sometimes it does happen.

When we speak of the backward areas, we should remember that even the so-called advanced States have backward pockets and the policy which we propose should be such as to promote accelerated development of all these pockets wherever they may be.

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The policies of the financial institutions are also being reoriented in favour of the development of industries in such areas and as the President's Address has pointed out, all these schemes will be fruitful only if the infrastructure for development is built up expeditiously in all these areas.

Shri S.N. Mishra spoke of the Fourth Plan being outdated. I honestly do not understand what is meant by this. The immediate tasks before the nation in the economic field are to reduce disparities swiftly while adding to production; also to achieve and consolidate agricultural and industrial self-reliance and to lay the firm basis for further technological change from our own capacity and know-how. While doing this, we must pay special attention to the problem of the educated unemployed on the one hand the rural landless on the other. Now, the Fourth Plan does set out to do this and whatever re-thinking or enlargement we have done in the last few months has been in order to do this more effectively. So it is not as if the Fourth Plan was drawn up some 15 years or more ago and has now merely been touched up and presented to the country anew.

Now I come to the points raised by some hon. Members relating to foreign affairs. Many of these have been discussed in this House on several occasions. I hope the House will excuse me but it does seem as if the thinking on foreign affairs of some Members has got stuck somewhere. The Plan has not got stuck, it is not the Plan, it is the thinking of some people that gets stuck up while the world itself has changed and moved very much further.

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Many Governments have noticeably given up their rigid and inflexible postures of the past whether in concept or in expression. But I noticed, while I was in the House before speaking, that some of our Members have obviously not done so. Our own endeavour has been to keep pace with the changes in the world and even, if possible, to anticipate them so that our national interests are safeguarded at all times. Hon. Members will agree that no country can claim that, however right or strong its policies, the expected results are always realised. We have to persevere with patience and determination and not give up what we consider to be right and moral because of some temporary setback.

Sir, we have been strengthening our friendship. I was astonished to learn that some Members have thought that there has been a deterioration in our relations with our neighbouring countries. As the President in his Address said, we attach great importance to our relations with Afghanistan, Burma, Ceylon, Iran and Nepal and have devoted special attention to these countries. We are making sincere and earnest efforts to increase our economic and political cooperation with these countries. Some differences or minor difficulties might arise occasionally. But these will always be resolved in a spirit of goodwill, understanding and cordiality.

As regards our two other neighbours, Pakistan and China, there have been no dramatic developments. The House knows that it is my view that we should keep trying to make Pakistan realise the importance of resolving all bilateral differences in a peaceful manner. I feel that this is as much in their interest as it is in ours to give up attitudes of conflict and confrontation. It is unfortunate that China continues to see the realities of India through a distorted mirror.

Sir, an hon. Member here said that we did not outline what steps we would take in this regard in the President's Address. I am sure the House will appreciate that these are

hardly matters which one can outline beforehand. The whole world has changed and is changing today, and I think we are trying to keep pace with these changes. In this fluid and delicate situation it is better not to say too much.

Some hon. Members have allowed anger and frustration to cloud their thinking. Some have said that our political freedom is being endangered. Quite different reasons were given by the different parties. Now, political freedom can be endangered basically only by one thing, and that is when the people themselves are weakened, whether they are weakened by communalism, *i.e.,* by lack of trust among themselves or whether they are weakened by any one group thinking that they know all the answers and the people need not be consulted. Both are equally dangerous to democracy.

The Government are fully aware of the difficulties faced by the minority communities and are doing everything possible to try and help them. As I said on a previous occasion, this is not a matter which can be dealt with purely administratively or by making laws. It is something in which very consciously and determinedly we have to create a right social atmosphere. It is for the hon. Members to judge whether all political parties in our country are helping to create such an atmosphere.

Sir, the purpose of the Opposition is obviously to oppose...

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That is the purpose*. But when they find that it is not possible to change, then the Opposition fumes in the form of frustration and anger. Personally, Sir, I have always welcomed opposition because when life is easy one tends to become flabby and it is not good to be flabby. But in opposing the Government's policies, I want our hon. Members not to sap the self-confidence of the nation. In fact, I would go a step further and submit to them that the way in which the public of India is reacting or is acting–because it is we who are reacting to what they do, it is they who are giving the direction, it is they who have the momentum for progress and change–they will refuse to shed their self-confidence however much some individuals might try to say all these things.

In my Budget Speech I set out our socio-economic thinking but it has a political counterpart as well. Just as we have avoided the extremes of doing too little or attempt too much in economics, so also do we wish to avoid the political extremes. We are convinced that there is no path better than the democratic, secular, socialist path to which we are pledged. I think it was in this House that somebody said that democracy comes first and socialism comes second or something like that. I want to make it very clear that I think there cannot be true democracy without socialism and secularism. Nor do I think there can be true socialism without democracy. All these are parts of the same whole.

Now, Sir, when I was talking earlier about the Opposition I was not saying that they should not oppose. I was merely drawing their attention to the roots of our culture where it is said that because of anger and frustration, one is not able to think clearly, to speak

* Replying to Shri Rajnarain's remark, "Not only to oppose but to satisfy the public and change the Government".

clearly or to act clearly. As the *Bhagwad Gita* warns us, from anger comes confusion. And I think a lot of the confusion that has been generated in this House recently, has come from anger and frustration. So I would request all hon. Members to think calmly and clearly about all these questions. I have no doubt that if we keep determinedly to the path which I have outlined, we shall overcome all the obstacles in our way.

Sir, I commend the Motion of Shri Arjun Arora to this honourable House.

Democracy and Development*

For the last five days or so we have had the debate on the President's Address. I am glad that several Members recognise that this Address marks the beginning of a new phase in our national life. It is reflected not only in the Budget but in the many steps which have been taken and it will further be reflected in other steps. We have had the customary speeches from hon. Members sitting opposite in which they have set forth views, which are expected and well-known from their side. Nevertheless we have always welcomed criticism of all kinds, especially in a debate of this nature which gives us an opportunity of putting forward our own objectives and policies.

The President has beckoned to us to look ahead, to look forward. Some of our friends opposite seem to have turned a deaf ear to this call; this has not surprised us. The debate has succeeded in performing another useful function. The events of the last few months have had the effect of bringing together on the one side people who are largely in favour of progress and on the other side those who look backward...(*Interruption.*)

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In this House we are so absorbed in immediate problems that we tend to take for granted the large intellectual and political forces at work in the world (*Interruptions*). As you have yourself remarked, Sir, neither loud noise nor abuse is a substitute for argument. I was saying that we tend to be absorbed in day to day problems and therefore tend to take for granted the larger intellectual and political forces which are at work in the world today. While we are involved in changing the economic and social structure of our country, technology is changing and transforming the entire world. Modern communication methods are having an impact on young people everywhere including our own country, even in the remote parts of the country. Let us not forget that what we say and do today must have meaning for young people. Our decisions must stand the test of their approval during the coming years.

I must confess my disappointment at the speech of the hon. Leader of the Opposition. Many of us had hoped that the emergence of a formal Leader of the Opposition would make a difference in the level of the debate and would strengthen parliamentary convention and civilities. I am sorry that this hope has not been fulfilled. His speech was short on vision, short on perspective, short on facts and short on temper. Frustration breathes through every word he uttered. A sense of defeat and utter helplessness which has enveloped him

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *L.S. Deb.*, 4 March, 1970, cc. 211-28.

and his group, I am glad to say that it is not shared by the people of this country or by any of us on this side of the House. At no time have our people felt more imbued not only with the urge for change but also with a growing feeling of their capacity to bring about this change.

Sir, recent events have brought about, as I said just now, a broad division between forward-looking people and those who wish to stay out. In fact, it was the likemindedness among the no-changers that in a way led to the events which have taken place. The debate has given further proof of such likemindedness. Prof. Ranga and Dr. Ram Subhag Singh sounded much alike except for their accent (*Interruption*) I believe that a common mint supplies both of them with the currency for their ideas and their phrases.

The hon. Member, Shri S.K. Patil, sought to resurrect Mark Twain. Mark Twain has been one of my favourite authors when I was a child and, if I may say so, it was not one of his better sayings which was quoted. Mr. Patil spoke of slogans, but few people have used more slogans. He talked also of my being a prisoner. Perhaps, the hon. House has heard the story of the tiger which was put in a cage, but he took consolation in thinking that it was the whole world which was in a cage because he saw it through the bars.

Shri Patil has been a forthright and candid person. He has never hidden his true opinions, no matter how he has voted. I know that his views on nationalisation, on socialism and the privy purse are not shared by all those among whom he now sits. I hope, however, that he will vote with them as he voted with the Congress when it adopted the 10 point resolution. He spoke of privy purses with great passion. Let him convert his own followers to his point of view, before he preached to the rest of the House and to the Government.

The House and the country need have no feeling that anything wrong is done either in appreciating the historic role played by the princes when our country became independent or in asking them today to move with history in the same spirit which they had then displayed. I should like to acknowledge the courage and farsightedness which a large number of princes are displaying to bring about social integration even as they helped the political integration of the country.

However, I should like to remind the House that it was no accident that the loudest acclamation during the President's Address was reserved for his mention of the ending of privy purses and the privileges.

Some hon. Members talked of inter-border disputes. I think, Shri Lakkappa mentioned it. The object of setting up Commissions is to assess facts and points of view in depth so that their recommendations can lead to decisions which have a measure of fairness. Territorial disputes have arisen between our States because of a variety of historical circumstances. The factors are not the same everywhere ; but issues do not get settled unless the action taken will generally satisfy the majority or dissatisfy the least number of the people concerned. Hon. Members will recall that several recommendations made by the State Reorganisation Commission had either to be substantially modified or to be rejected. But in all such cases, the main object was to provide the maximum satisfaction to the people concerned. There was a demand also for certain basic principles to be enunciated to solve

the present disputes and those that might arise in future. When this was first said, I think it was at the meeting of the National Integration Council in Srinagar. I must confess that the idea seemed attractive but on further consideration it seems somewhat naive to suggest that all human affairs can be reduced to general laws and I think that there might be more practical wisdom in solving some of the issues, in the light of their own facts and circumstances. It might be hard to evolve principles to fit all cases in a way which would satisfy everyone. Indeed, we know from experience that some solutions create more problems than they solve. I would, therefore, make a plea for us to try to isolate some of these problems rather than to generalise them.

It has been said in this House and outside that we are, or perhaps I am, planning to use the civil service for political purposes. I have denied and contradicted this on every possible occasion and I can say that my remark about committed civil servants has been twisted. I have always held the view that the duty of the civil servants is to give frank and honest advice and not to let their judgement be cramped by fear or favour. I certainly do not want civil servants who are in any way servile or politically convenient because if they were so, they would not be helpful to the Government or to the administration. However, I do think that all people who are in charge of the administration or of projects should have a commitment to the service of the people and their welfare. They should think of people as individual human beings, not merely as statistics. Therefore, when I used the word "commitment", what I meant, as I have clarified on previous occasions, is that they should be loyal to the guiding principles of our Constitution and the objectives which have been adopted by Parliament.

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I think it is a good question.* They are not disloyal but we are all aware that previously there was not great stress laid on attitudes, because Government did not have the great problems of development and change before it. By and large, I have found these qualities of courage and conviction at all levels of the civil services.

While talking of the civil service, I am aware that since Government have to assume larger responsibilities, we must constantly aim at greater efficiency, more expertise and more speedy methods of work.

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Reference was made by several hon. Members to an interview which I gave some months ago to a French magazine called *Elle*. Hon. Members have presumably not seen the original and they have referred to a translation. The translated version has appeared in a weekly which I do not normally see and which always has a slant of its own. Only this morning I saw the original article in French, not the whole series—I believe three series have appeared and more are to come but the portion to which reference was made here. The lady who interviewed me seems to have got mixed up about certain things. Immediately before the lines which were mentioned here, she has mentioned my great reverence to Gandhiji. The words which appear afterwards which were quoted here are not in quotation

* **Replying to a Member**'s question : "Are they loyal ?"

marks they are her own version of what she thought I had said. She also says that I told her that Gandhiji lived in Anand Bhavan during all his visits to Delhi. Sometimes, in these interviews, people get a little mixed up. As I said, as regards the reference to village economy, she does not claim to quote my exact words. Hon. Members will appreciate that with the increasing number of journals which are cropping up all over the place, it is hardly possible to chase every wrong or twisted article. If one did that, one would not have time for anything else, specially in regard to the journals brought out by some of the hon. Members, sitting opposite which seem to have made it their business to deliberately twist the meaning of whatever I say. In Gandhi Centenary Year, there was hardly a meeting where I did not refer to Gandhiji and pay tribute to the inspiration and guidance which he gave to our country in its darkest hour. In this House, I have referred to him as the greatest revolutionary of our times. It is unthinkable and in fact I did not call him reactionary. The words "reactionary and mad cap", I put these in quotation marks, are presumably Shri Piloo Mody's own contribution to truth !

Acharya Kripalani has also referred to the Padma Shri award to Shri Ritwik Ghatak. Shri Ghatak is a film maker, and most Indian and foreign film critics think he is one of the most creative of our film makers. When an artist is honoured, it is for his art–a musician for the quality of his music, an artist for the quality of his painting. Shri Ghatak, I believe, had to go through many stresses. He has publicly said, a few days ago, that he had gone through a severe mental crisis and had uttered some unfortunate words. Gandhiji's greatness cannot be sullied by such words. Hence, there should be Gandhian forgiveness in such things. We all know the humour and tolerance with which he himself dealt with such matters.

Hon. Members have naturally been concerned with our economic policy. I shall not deal with this matter in details today, as it will be discussed later on when the budget and the Plan are considered. However, I should like to mention a few points which, it seems to me, are based on wrong assumptions and imperfect data.

Prof. Ranga sought to develop a thesis of his own on steel. He seems to doubt that there would be any demand for the steel which we are planning to produce. He is perhaps under the impression that recessionary trends for the demand in steel and other engineering projects still continue. There was a decline in demand for steel between 1964 and 1968 ; but since then there has been a steady and significant rise. It is well known that there is an acute shortage of various types of steel such as billets, sheets, plates and wire rods. We must remember that any decision on the creation of additional capacity in steel has to be taken, not with reference to today's needs, but the long-term projection of demand. It takes anything from one to seven years to plan, design and commission a steel plant and for it to attain the rated capacity. That is why we have decided on the expansion of Bokaro and Bhilai and have also initiated action for the creation of new capacities.

The House is aware how many States are demanding steel plants. Perhaps Professor Ranga would be so kind as to help us out in dissuading them. Should he agree to this, may I ask him to start with Visakhapatnam ?

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I wonder how Shri Morarji Desai computed the capital cost of Bokaro at Rs. 2,860 per tonne. Probably, he has not been told of the extra pig iron production of about 900,000 tonnes. Taking this into account, the latest cost estimate would be about Rs. 2,500 per tonne. The main factors which pushed up the cost, as compared to plants such as Rourkela, are (1) devaluation because of which the cost went up by Rs. 75 crores event at the 1.7 million tonne stage; (2) considerable time spent between the completion of the Rourkela plant and Bokaro plant during which period there was considerable escalation of the cost of steel, cement, labour and so on ; (3) the cost of domestic and international equipment has also risen continuously. Such over runs in costs in other projects, whether of the public sector or private sector, due to similar factors are not unknown.

The Rourkela yield of finished steel from ingots at 1.8 million tonne stage is about 72 per cent. In Bokaro this is estimated to be 81 per cent, which gives considerable advantage to Bokaro. In other words, if the investment costs are calculated per tonne of finished steel, this factor alone would lower the cost of Bokaro by about ten per cent. Calculating in terms of finished steel the cost of Rourkela would be about Rs. 2,750 per tonne of finished steel, against Bokaro's investment cost of Rs. 3,100 per tonne of finished steel.

It should also be stressed that there has been a greater element of Indianisation ...indigenisation.

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Indigenisation entails additional cost not merely in respect of steel plants but also many other projects such as power and irrigation projects.

It is understandable that Shri Morarji Desai should refer to the virtues of social control. However, his inference that the position did not significantly improve after the nationalisation of the fourteen banks is mistaken. I am deliberately not going into the matter here, because this matter will come up very soon when the Banking Bill comes up for discussion.

Hon. Members are rightly agitated over Rhodesia. The Government of India consider the decision of the break-away regime to declare itself a Republic as totally illegal. Government will continue to support all measures taken by the world community and the African States against the racist regime.

We maintain our firm belief that any constitution for this colonial territory must ensure the principle of "One man one vote" in a multi-racial society. We also hold the view that world action should be concerted towards taking effective steps to lead Rhodesia to independence based on the principle of NIBMAR–no independnece before majority African rule.

The basic question before us today is what type of society we want to build. It is not merely a question of how much the national or the per capita income will go up but how one Indian will deal with another. Will he regard all his countrymen as equal ; will he

believe that some people have more rights than others; if there are differences which are not unlikely in any society, how will they be resolved–by resort to violence or through discussion and understanding?

We have inherited certain values not only from the long past but also from our training during the independnece movement under Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. (*Interruption*)

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...and Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose although there was a slight difference because at that time Netaji stood for violence, while we were pursuing the path of non-violence.

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I am talking about the independnece struggle.* There we had consciously taken the other path. I do not in any way want to lessen Netaji's image, his influence on the nation or his contribution to the freedom of our country. He holds a unique position and the entire nation has respect and admiration for him.

Let me make it very clear that our picture of India and the methods which we are pledged to pursue are certainly not those of the hon. Member opposite, Shri Vajpayee, and his party. He spoke of Indianisation. In his Address, the President has said that the problems of India require uniquely Indian solutions taking into account our way of life, our history and our tradition.

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If, therefore, Shri Vajpayee wants every Indian to love his country and to be patriotic, nobody can quarrel with that, and I certainly do not do so; nor is any special theory of Indianisation required. But, I think, his theory is not quite so innocent. Shri Vajpayee would not waste his energy in stating something which is so obvious. He and those of his way of thinking have a very definite purpose. Evidently, they have taken upon themselves to be the judges of who is Indian and who is not.

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This I think is most sinister**. Whenever any group sets itself up to decide who is an Indian and who is not, there is bound to be trouble. May I ask the hon. Member as to who will judge the quantum or the quality of Indianness of any individual ?

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Does he envisage that any tribunal would do it ?***

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* Responding to a query from Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta : "Do you disapprove of it ?"

** Replying to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee who quipped, "certainly not."

*** Replying to Shri Om Prakash Tyagi who said, "Indian culture".

The two things are entirely different because not being progressive does not deny anybody any right....*(*Interruption*)

What I want to know is : Does the hon. Member envisage a tribunal to go into the matter or does he think that it is his party who should be assigned this task ? We remember vividly the havoc caused in America by some people who declared other Americans to be un-American, and, in the entire world, when some Germans maintained that other Germans were un–Aryan and, therefore, un-German. These people have paraded under the banner of ultra-nationalism and have attempted and, unfortunatley in some cases succeeded, in undermining the very basis of democratic society. Such assertion of ultra–nationalism is a masquerade to disguise the face of reaction. And this must be unmasked. (*Interruptions*) If this course of Indianisation is so simple why should they argue ? (*Interruptions*)

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I have thought over deeply about what Mr. Vajpayee said here and what his other colleagues have said. I think, it is time that all these statements should be replied to. (*Interruptions*) I would just say that the test of any statement is not how you yourself interpret it, but what impact it has on the people about whom you make that statement. (*Interruptions*).

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We should be on guard against fine phrases which hide extremist designs, whether of the extreme right or of the extreme left.

Another spurious coin was put into circulation with the help of his** considerable speaking skill. I refer to the so-called swadeshi plan which is being propagated today by his party. This swadeshi plan is apparently...(*Interruptions*)

I have learnt that the exercise is done by an economist who has just arrived from Harvard University. I should like hon. Members to study this document in detail.

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Then they will discover that it is a mere outline which, promises much, but tells too little about how that promise is to be fulfilled.

It promises rapid acceleration of the rate of growth to over 10% per annum with full employment ; the raising of the lowest 10% of the population, significantly above the poverty line; and, please note, with the immediate termination of all foreign aid. This is not all. This Santa Claus also promises a programme of investment for a full nuclear arsenal as well. (*Interruptions*)

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* Replying to Shri S.K. Tapuriah's question : "How will you decide as to who is progressive and who is reactionary?"

When I saw this document the simile that came to my mind was that of the famous Indian rope trick about which so much is said and so little seen. I hope the hon. Member Shri Vajpayee will tell us how he proposes to force the community to save 50 per cent of the additional income generated. How will the rate of growth of agricultural output be increased to 6.5 per cent a year ? And, if foreign aid is to be discontinued immediately, and even after allowance is made for some unused capacity in the machine-building industry, how and in what concrete ways, will such a vastly expanded programme be sustained ? From where will the investment come ? I think that a sober and objective examination of this so-called Swadeshi Plan will probably bring disenchantment. May I invite the hon. Member* to have his plan examined in a professional and technical manner for its internal consistency and for the soundness of its economic analysis ? One should examine the validity of its data and, what is even more important, its social and political implications for the kind of society we have been endeavouring to evolve in India. It seems to me that Shri Vajpayee's party has a different set of political and social premises in mind, premises which are outside our system and which he is not prepared to articulate. In this plan there is a monopolistic conception of social order and its inconsistency is apparent in a democratic social system. It is true that I have given a good deal of time to Shri Vajpayee's thoughts because I think that they merit it. I have tried to see through his words, behind his sweet phrases and his beautiful Hindi.

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Shri Morarjibhai has referred to my speech in Ujjain and also to what I said in the other House on the Supreme Court.

Sir, in Ujjain, I barely referred to the Supreme Court, except to say that the news of its judgement had just come.

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I want to say very categorically that our reverence to the Supreme Court is total. In fact, everyone in this land should have the highest regard for the judiciary. The Constitution has clearly laid down the role of the Courts. And, all three parts of the Government—the Legislature, the Executive, and the Judiciary,–are pledged to upholding the Constitution. But, Sir, the Constitution has also given us certain Directive Principles. In realising them, difficulties of interpretation might arise. This is not a new development. We have gone through this before. Many of our Bills on land reform and soon have met with reverses, and this was what I had referred to in Ujjain, just in one very brief sentence.

But whenever any of our Acts has been struck down, we have taken the necessary remedial action within the framework of the Constitution, for every living Constitution contains within itself the capacity to respond to changing needs and to new forces of history.

As I said at the beginning of my speech, the pace of change in the entire world and in our own country is much faster now. This is something which is beyond our control. It is

* Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

the technological and scientific changes which are coming about which are bringing this about. But in the last year, it did look to our people as if the pace of change in India in some directions was slowing down. This is what had created restlessness and disturbance in the minds of many and especially of the younger generation. Now, we are again in a position to go forward. Let nothing be said which will hold back our people, which will sow doubt in their minds or deflect them from their determined path. Mistakes are sometimes made : wrong things are also being done; Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee made mention of some of them ; but basically, the people are on the move. They are impatient only because they see that change can be faster; they are impatient because they see that their difficulties and their hardships can be removed . Let it be said that responsible representatives of the people acted at this difficult time with vision and courage and with faith in the people of India.

As I said, I remain deeply convinced that the democratic path is the only path for India to solve its problems. But there can be no true democracy without socialism and without secularism. There can be no true socialism without true democracy. So, let us move forward with this ideal, for only then shall we be able to reach our goal and overcome all obstacles...(*Interruptions*)

Problems and Prospects of Indian Economy*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the President's Address has been debated for three days. Many hon. Members have spoken and I am grateful to those who have supported the Motion and to those who have offered useful suggestions.

I am glad that several Members saw in the Address the beginning of a great renewal. With the accession of strength and faith from a fresh mandate given by a new generation, we are on the threshold of a new beginning. Our people have proved that the dark forebodings of pessimists at home and abroad were the mumblings of false prophets.

I must hasten to add that I look upon the massive support of the electorate not as an achievement but as an opportunity. The President's Address has indicated some of the steps which the Government propose to take to make use of this opportunity. These steps and many others will have to be translated into operational programmes. In the meanwhile, Government welcomes constructive criticism which will help to improve our programmes.

In my election speeches which, unfortunately, Shri Vajpayee does not seem to have read–I repeat–in every single speech I have said that the road ahead is long and full of hardships and those who supported us should be prepared for hard work, for difficulties and perhaps even for danger.

I have carefully followed the speeches of the hon. Members. I was touched by the great solicitude shown by Shri Fatehsinghrao Gaekwad for the plight of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and Shrimati Gayatri Devi's concern for the poor. It seems easier to shed tears than privy purses. I assure them and the House that these vestiges of feudalism cannot last long ...(*Interruptions*).

I welcome the endorsement of the need to prevent pollution of air, water and soil and the imbalances of nature around us. I myself have been deeply interested in ecology since long before that word became fashionable in the western world.

The complaint of some Members that AIR and TV were used by the Government for Party ends need not be taken seriously. The only time I had broadcast was to announce the dissolution of the Lok Sabha.

Complaints against the Election Commission have already been dealt with by my colleague, the Minister of Law and Justice.

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *L.S. Deb.*, 2 April, 1971, cc. 130-43.

It was natural that in a debate of this kind much should be said about poverty. Our poverty is long standing. I have not been awakened to it today as some Members of the Opposition are apt to say from time to time. If I may say with some hesitation and deep humility, it was because of this awakening and concern that my family decided to give up most of its property and to change its entire mode of life in 1920-21.

Much has been achieved since Independence. There is no doubt that today a larger number of people are better dressed and better fed than before. How do we judge the poverty of any area ? We should judge it against the conditions which existed in that particular area earlier on. Is it the claim of any hon. Member that less has been done, for example, in Rajasthan or in Madhya Pradesh or in Orissa in the last few years than was done, say, in a century of princely rule ? Yet the fact of poverty remains and vast numbers do lack their basic requirements. Also the needs of our people are increasing and will continue to increase as our development plans go ahead.

The hon. Member, Shri Vajpayee, spoke tauntingly to what he called our "war on poverty." But, actually, this was the title of his manifesto. Compared to the glitter of the Jan Sangh manifesto, our own was matter-of-fact and down-to-earth.

It was remarkable how our people showed their keen sense of discrimination when they refused to be attracted by the stalking golden deer, the *Swarna Mrig*, of the Jan Sangh or to beled astray by the outworn economic theories of the Swatantra Party, dressed up in elegant phrases.

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I would remind the hon. Member that we had a number of Elections before this General Election*. Some of our candidates had the bicycle as their symbol, some had the coconut tree or other emblems and yet all these or most of them won in the elections. And I should like to say also that something rather good happened because we took the cow and the calf as our symbol. It was proved that it was not a religious symbol, that it was a symbol of the prosperity of village and town people. It is after seeing the manifestoes and the performances of the various parties that the people have taken their decision.

The hon. Member who sits opposite me, Shri Gopalan, in his long indictment of Governmental policies, referred to some central projects. There was not, and there cannot be any discrimination or deliberate neglect of Kerala which is one of the most beautiful parts of our country and one which has had many problems. It is true that the Precision Instruments Plant and the Phyto Chemicals Plant, which we had proposed to set up there were not taken up for implementation. But this is because, on re-assessment, demands for the products of these Plants were not found to be good.

Government have to make a constant reappraisal of industrial and other programmes, and have to adapt them to the needs of the situation.

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* Replying to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's remark : "They were most attracted by the cow and calf."

However, in regard to the Cochin Shipyard, Shri Gopalan has failed to keep up with recent developments. An agreement has already been signed with Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, covering the preparation of designs for the Shipyard and for Consultancy Services for its construction. The project will be completed in five years and is estimated to cost Rs. 45.40 crore. Rs. 3 crore have been provided in the 1971-72 interim Budget.

Shri Indrajit Gupta referred to Monopoly Houses and the issue of new licences to some of them, which also has been agitating some of our own Members on this side. Neither the Monopolies and the Restrictive Trade Practices Act nor the Industrial Licensing Policy rules out the grant of new licences to Business Houses. They only define the limits and conditions, subject to which these Houses would be allowed to expand further.

The decisions taken in individual cases do not involve any deviation from the policies which have been clearly spelt out. These policies seek to reconcile a number of objectives– the promotion of industrial growth and employment opportunities, accelerated development of backward regions, expeditious development of core industries and the attainment of economic self-reliance.

It would not be fair to view the grant of licences to the larger industrial houses in isolation from other decisions of the Government, for instance, the reservation of larger fields for small-scale industries, the exclusion of larger industrial houses from the middle sector and the expansion of the public sector as well as other policies designed to broaden the base of entrepreneurship.

A young Member from our side, Shri A.C. George made several concrete suggestions, in particular, regarding Housing in urban areas. We have already made a beginning in this direction with the setting up of the Housing and Urban Development Finance Corporation. We shall endeavour to expand the role of the Corporation in the next two to three years.

There is also need for a new look at rural housing. I am sorry Shri Piloo Mody, our Architect Member, is not present, because I think that it would be very useful if our architects would give thought to new and inexpensive designs for rural housing, which would make the best use of locally available materials.

I was looking forward to hearing Shri Shyamnandan Mishra and was indeed disappointed that he surrendered his time to another Member of his party...

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I know that planning has lost its luster since his* connection with it has ceased.

I now come to the amendments of which there is a large crop. Some of these refer to rising prices and the need to stabilise them. The House knows how deeply concerned I am, and indeed all my colleagues in Government are, about this matter, and that we are deeply aware of the consequences which would follow if price stability is seriously

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* Shri Shyamnandan Mishra.

impaired. Much of the increase in prices during the past year is because of the failure to raise the production of commercial crops.

Foodgrain prices have, on the other hand, been generally quiet, reflecting our success in raising production in that area. Hon. Members know that because of the drought, we have had to bend all our energies to increase the production of foodgrains. There is no doubt that during this period the other crops did not get the kind of boost or help which they should have.

I think the Minister of Food has already told the House that we intend to adopt a range of measures to raise the productivity of such crops. We also intend to curb speculation.

In an inter-dependent economy, a price rise in one sector soon spreads to other sectors. For example, the rise in the prices of industrial raw materials pushes up the prices of manufactures which in turn leads to the demand for higher prices for farm products. The wage cost also tends to rise. Thus, what is called for today is a certain restraint and willingness on the part of the community not to press for short-term compensations.

We intend to protect the interests of the weaker sections who suffer most when prices go up. The public distribution system is aimed to serve this purpose.

I am sure hon. Members will appreciate that a part of the price increase in recent years was due to our anxiety to assure the farmers are reasonable price for their products. However, it is important that in this process, the interests of the small farmers, the landless labourers and the other poor people who live on the land and who do not have surplus products to sell are not harmed. It is for the Government to reconcile the interests of consumers and those of producers. Only in this way, price policy can be successful. We must work for the genuine welfare of farmers, and at the same time we must also ensure that certain sections do not unreasonably exploit the rest of the community. The welfare of the nation as a whole must at all times take precedence over that of an individual segment. We should remember that other countries including many developed countries are also experiencing rising prices in varying degrees. Of course, there are greater difficulties for us because of the lower standard of living of so many of our people. But some pressure on prices is almost inescapable in a growing economy.

We have to recognise and accept the fact that in a developing country such as ours, which must increase the pace of investment, we cannot afford to adopt a deflationary policy of budgetary surpluses coupled with measures for keeping the level of investments low.

So while implementing a plan which is large in relation to our resources but not large enough for the needs of our people, some upward pressure on prices is inevitable, I would, therefore, request hon. Members not to politicise this issue excessively.

Another matter which came up for criticism was the grant of industrial licences in the period immediately preceding the general election. My colleague, the Minister of Industrial Development has already answered a specific question on this subject. Nothing was done in a hurry or outside normal procedure, and it does not seem strange to me that we should

be accused of not holding up licences which had been cleared in the normal course, and at the same time be blamed for delaying them.

Even during the election, when I was in Bombay, the complaint was made that the country's economy was suffering because Government was not granting licences fast enough. So obviously, this complaint is part of the smear compaign of the so-called grand alliance before, during and after the poll.

There was an increase in the number of applications for industrial licences in the calendar year, 1970, reflecting an improvement in the industrial climate. This is as it should be. After June, 1970, when the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act (MRTP) came into force, Government had to evolve policies and procedures to harmonise the objectives of industrial licensing with those of the MRTP Act. After Government has laid down the guidelines for the disposal of applications attracting the provisions of the MRTP Act, applications falling within that category were considered for further processing. The formalities and procedures followed by the Government for the grant of licences during the period preceding the poll were exactly the same as those that were being followed earlier, and, as I just said, there was no relaxation of any accepted policy or normal standards of scrutiny in regard to these licences.

The other amendments seek to emphasise the need for the nationalisation of the remaining banks, of foreign trade, of major and basic industries and so on. Last year, I had explained Government's general approach to these and similar demands for nationalisation. Government are not afraid of nationalisation. At the same time, they do not consider nationalisation to be an independent objective by itself. Decisions on nationalisation must fit into the general scheme of priorities of our economic programme.

The direction in which the Government want to proceed is quite clear. We visualise a growing and dominant role for the public sector. We want the public sector to be able to influence and control the pace and direction of investment. Our available resources should be deployed in the best possible manner. Any proposal for the nationalisation of an industry or activity must be subjected to two tests : firstly, is it necessary from the point of view of enabling the public sector to attain a dominant role and to occupy a key position in the economy ; and secondly, does it further our social objectives ? The nationalisation of banks satisfied both these tests.

Similarly, when we find any industry or unit operating in a manner which is detrimental to our national interests, we shall certainly not hesitate to take it over. But we should not be deflected from our priorities. Our priorities, which are known to the House–but I would like to reiterate them-are at present the acceleration of development and the augmentation of employment. Whatever resources we can mobilise, should be canalised as far as possible into further investment in new, productive activities in the public sector. In the next few years, we shall be engaged in a relentless battle against poverty. We should not dissipate our energies and our resources in diversionary battles which can only make a marginal contribution to victory on the main front.

The subject which was mentioned by almost every speaker, one which has caused deeper and more widespread concern than any other problem facing our economy today is the question of unemployment. This problem is not unique to India. The U.K., U.S.A., and other developed countries are all facing similar situations. It is not difficult to understand why unemployment has assumed such large dimensions in India. Firm figures are available only in respect of the organised sector, and in this sector the rate of growth of employment opportunities was somewhat satisfactory in the first half of the "sixties", being 6.8 per cent in the Third Plan period. But this rate started declining in 1964-65 and by 1966-67 has slumped to 0.8 per cent. During 1967-68 it was almost negligible. The slow growth of the economy particularly in the industrial sector was responsible for the sharp decline in employment opportunities.

In his speech, Hon'ble Mr. Krishna Menon quoted statistics of unemployment. In India the most serious part of the problem is not open and wholetime unemployment, but under employment, and this is why it is difficult to quantify the problem. Hon. Members know that sometime ago the report of an expert committee, presided over by Prof. Dantwala, pointed out this fact. In the absence of reliable figures, we should not allow ourselves to be intimidated by uncertain statistics.

I entirely share the concern voiced in this House and outside about this problem. To keep human beings idle is to waste a rich national resource, and I am particularly conscious of the serious hardships which our educated young people are suffering. Many of them come to see me.

We have mentioned the word "alienation" in the President's Address. Perhaps the most dangerous of all alienations is the feeling of disenchantment among able-bodied young men and women who are deprived of productive employment. This is an economic tragedy and also a human tragedy. We cannot preach about our concern for our fellow-men, as I believe a young friend pointed out yesterday, if our social arrangements have no place for them.

People get alienated if they do not feel wanted. But there are other kinds of alienated individuals also–the Naxalite type for whom patriotism is a bourgeois enthusiasm, the superficial cosmopolitans who are too cynical to appreciate the qualities of our people and our country. There are also some of our highly trained specialists and others who would rather opt for better opportunities and higher salaries abroad then face hardship and frustration in creating better conditions for their own descendants. I sincerely hope that in the end India will win back to its fold all those who are feeling frustrated or alienated.

Hon. Members have referred to the need for allowances for those who are unemployed. I do not think that subsistence allowance to the unemployed is an answer to the travails of our youth. Let us not make these young people pensioners. Let us not accustom them to doles or subsidies. Let us try to provide them with opportunities in which they can find fulfilment. For this we should mobilise all the resources we can and raise the level of investment in the public as well as the private sector. The reappraisal of the Plan should give our development programmes and employment bias. A climb back to the ascending

path of economic growth and vigorous implementation of the Plan will contribute to a significant expansion of productive employment on a durable basis.

But I am not one of those who subscribe fully to the view that if we take care of the Plan, employment will take care of itself. I am fully aware that when unemployment is acute and widespread, we must have special measures to deal with it. Programmes with high employment potential have to be indentified and given a special push. Quite a few schemes of this nature have been incorporated in the Fourth Plan as recast and presented to this House in last May. The House is aware of the details of the schemes relating to small farmers, sub-marginal farmers, landless labourers and rural workers in areas prone to drought. These schemes have already been taken up for implementation in large tracts distributed all over the country, although they may take sometime to gather momentum. A provision of Rs. 235 crore is envisaged for these special programmes during the Plan period. Additionally, projects for small farmers and agricultural labour will receive support from financial institutions to the extent of about Rs. 300 crore. Similarly the total financial support for dry land farming programmes is expected to be about Rs. 150 crore. In the Budget presented last week the Finance Minister has indicated a provision of Rs. 50 crore for a crash scheme for rural employment.

I know that almost every hon. Member has taken exception to the smallness of this sum. I should like to remind them that the programmes which come under this crash programme are only supplementary to other programmes to create additional employment. Employment opportunities are provided by the entire economic system and you cannot put the whole of the problem on one side and only one of the several measures evolved to solve it, on the other. I have announced in my public speeches that the programme would start soon. I should like to tell Shri Vajpayee, because he felt that the entire Rs. 50 crore would be spent on the mere planning of it, that all the planning and other preparations have been completed and the programme, if it has not already started, would do so in a few days. We want to make this programme the nucleus of a more comprehensive programme. These programmes are oriented to create more employment in the rural areas. But the works which are envisaged will also absorb the educated such as technicians, engineers and other educated unemployed.

But we are conscious that there is need to devise yet other programmes to absorb the educated unemployed in larger numbers. For this, Plan outlays must be increased in sectors such as education and public health. Unfortunately most Members demand big prestigious projects for their areas instead of helping to strengthen these other services. A higher rate of industrial growth through the maximisation of investment in the public and private sectors is by far the most effective answer to the question of educated unemployment. The President's Address has indicated that we propose to set up task forces to identify the various impediments to the expansion of industrial production and to propose suitable changes in policies and procedures.

This leads me to another related issue of national importance, and that is the question of higher levels of investment, whether in public or the private sector. This can come about only as a result of an all-round improvement in efficiency and productivity. Concern for

higher productivity should become almost an obsession with those engaged in productive processes, whether they are managers or workers, because only by augmenting productivity can we enlarge the surpluses available for investment. This is an obligation which the employed owe to those who are yet to be employed. The employed should not become an instrument for the exploitation of the unemployed. As my colleague, Shri Khadilkar, has already told this House, Government propose to hold discussions with trade union leaders as well as representatives of management on these and other issues to seek their co operation and support in ensuring increasingly higher levels of employment at rising levels of productivity.

Several hon. Members have spoken about the law and order problem in West Bengal. Our youngest Member, Shri P.R. Das Munshi, made a moving speech based on personal experience. It brought home to me once again and to us all the difficulties of young people and the awesome character of political violence in that State. The Government are determined to curb violence, whoever is responsible and whatever the motive behind it.

Shri Gopalan took umbrage at the use of the expression "politics of murder". But I am sure we will all agree that murder cannot be sanctioned or sanctified even though some have made it their political creed.

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We have been taking all appropriate steps to stop this menace and will continue to do so. The situation in West Bengal cannot be dealt with by the police alone. We are conscious of this and Members also have drawn our attention. Other measures are needed and they are not being neglected.

The greatest emphasis has been laid on the revival of Calcutta and its surroundings. The development of other parts of Bengal is equally important.

During President's rule, immediate steps were taken to bring land reform legislation more in tune with the aspirations of the people and the requirements of social justice. We are urging other State Governments to adopt similar legislation.

Some hon. Members have referred in their speeches as well as in the amendments to the question of Centre-State relations, particularly the financial aspects of this relationship. But I was surprised that these issues should be raised by those who call themselves Marxists who, I thought, were the votaries of centralism. It is because they are no longer an all-India party that their mental horizons have been scaled down to a provincial level ? Or perhaps a weak centre fits in with their present strategy ?

It is not for me to say what is good for them, but when votaries of Marx constrict their mental horizon, there does seem something wrong in their understanding of a universalist methodology. (*Interruption*)

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The issues pertaining to Centre-State relations have been debated at length on many occasions in this House ; also in the meetings of the National Development Council and in the meetings of State Chief Ministers and other Ministers. They have only recently been studied comprehensively by expert bodies such as the Finance Commission and the Administrative Reforms Commission.

I think our Constitution has visualised fruitful roles for the Centre and for the States in its scheme for distribution of powers. It embodies financial and other provisions to deal with problems as they arise. In particular, the Constitution provides for a periodical review of the financial relations between the Centre and the States through the Finance Commission, which is an autonomous statutory body. Under the awards of the Commission, substantial resources are being transferred from the Centre to the States.

Hon. Members are aware that a successful federation cannot exist merely on rules. It can be successfully only if there is full cooperation. A number of difficult financial issues do arise from time to time and from all States, regardless of the party or parties which happen to form the Government at that time. So, the problem is not one of unwillingness or discrimination on the part of the Centre but rather of how the Centre and the States can jointly endeavour to raise the maximum possible resources to meet at least the minimum needs of the people. I should like to emphasise that all those interested in national unity and welfare should look upon the relationship between the Centre and the States as one not of confrontation but of partnership and cooperation in the great task of nation-building.

The President has invited the members of the House to lend their support to the efforts which we have outlined. I repeat that invitation. Nobody says that the task is easy, but neither should anybody say that this Government and this House held back from this great endeavour. Common concern for the country is also a part of democracy. Let us certainly criticise one another in the House and outside, but let us also work together for a common purpose, for the all round growth and prosperity of our country.

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I purposely did not refer to East Bengal in my speech.* Hon. Members know of our deep concern. I do not know what move I can say. These are matters which, as I have remarked on an earlier occasion, we can discuss with the leaders of the opposition...(*Interruptions*). Well, as I said, it is a little difficult to discuss these matters in the House. Hon. Members have most of the information as it has appeared in the newspapers. Fighting is going on there; the people are suffering great hardship; we are aware of all these matters and we had expressed our sentiments firmly and in a dignified manner, in the Resolution which was passed unanimously in the House. If hon. Members would like any special information, I am willing to meet leaders of the opposition, as we did before, and answer any questions they would like to ask.

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* Responding to the demand of some Members to say something about East Bengal.

Measures to Eradicate Poverty*

†Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, a number of my friends expressed their views here and I have been quite attentive to them. All have perceived that after this election, a new scenario has been heralded in our country. People have put forward their verdict in a very clear way. They faced a number of hardships, sometimes they were subjected to atrocities also. However, acting with courage, they gave their mandate decisively and made it clear as to what programmes they considered to be beneficial for themselves.

As one of my friends*** has just told, some persons expected the election results otherwise. But I for one did not even think of the election results to be otherwise. Not because we wished to win; not because we were sure of our victory, but because we felt the nerves of the masses. We knew their aspirations. We knew it well that we could gain strength only by the path that leads to the fulfilment of their basic requirements to lead a respectful life. That is what the election results have proved to be. The call of India's masses has echoed not only in this country, but also in the whole world, and some of the outsiders who did not have faith in our policies—perhaps they may not be having even today, they heard and realised the call of the teeming millions of the country. However, unfortunately, there are persons in our country who are even today bent upon not to lend credence to that call. I do not know whether they are interested to hear it or have kept their ears closed. Some speeches made here are indicative of the fact as to how blind they are even now to the mood of the masses.

The President has once again drawn our attention to the expectations of the masses and has indicated the direction to be followed, and types of programmes to be implemented by us. Evidently, he has not gone in details of all the programmes, nor was it proper on the occasion like this. Time was yet another limiting factor to go into such details. However, he made mention of some of the programmes and also indicated that the Government would take full-hearted steps to implement the election manifesto or programmes of the party...

Our hon. Member Ganga Babu has opined that the use of money power in our elections has been increasing day by day. I fully share his view that it is not a thing to be cherished. However, I would like to remind him that those who have spent money most have lost the elections. Money could not make them win. In order to support my point, I would like to cite a case of one of the members of our party who has been elected from Bihar. It was a

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *R.S. Deb.*, 5 April, 1971, cc. 242-58.

† Original speech in Hindi.

*** Shri Hamid Ali Schamnad.

constituency regarding which our all party men had stated that we would not win there. They had even asked to surrender this constituency to some other party. But I said that we must allow one or the other partyman to fight election in that constituency even if he might lose his deposit. He told me that the more money his opponent spent and the more invectives he hurled upon me, the more votes he lost. Our candidate won the election with comfortable majority in that constituency. As such, it is good not to spend money in elections, but it is even better that in this election masses were not swayed away by money power while exercising their franchise.

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One who moves around in Delhi shall find that the poor of this place lent their support to us not only by voting in our favour but also by giving money needed for elections, so much so that the taxiwallas gave their taxies and bore the cost of petrol tool. So was the case with TSR wallas who paid for petrol also.

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It is not a hearsay. They have told me exclusively.

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It is true that some difficulties were faced during the elections. Sometimes difficulties do come in the way of each and every election-atrocities are committed, and these have happened during this election as well...But, we have to see that such things do not occur again. And this is possible only when we get rid of casteism and communalism from our elections; from our national life, and that is our endeavour. We know that we have not been able to achieve complete success in this regard. However, this cannot be achieved only by the Government, or by an individual or by an officer. It is a national issue which requires the cooperation of all parties, all hon. Members and of private institutions or individuals. All should face this problem jointly and only then we can get success in this regard.

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This time at certain places the caste factor has influenced the voting behaviour, but it failed at most of the places. People voted by ignoring the caste. Hence, these elections have been completed in this way and our way is open to go ahead. I do not see these elections only from the victory point of view, but a door to socialism has been opened...The path is lying before us. I never made any promise in any of my speeches. Whatever the promises were there, all were mentioned in our manifesto. Our manifesto contained our action plan, but I never said in any speech that the persons voting us would be given this or that facility or their problems would be solved soon. In every speech, I have said that since the path is very long and is full of difficulties, full of risks and dangers, therefore, whosoever is ready to face these problems, to face these dangers, should give us vote, cooperate with us as had been done during the freedom movement. People voted for us, but we do not take it as our victory. However, this much we do agree that the people are

our strength. They expect that we should move towards socialism step by step, but as soon as it may be possible. So, this is a challenge before us. Whosoever has taken the responsibility in his hands should do the duty of a responsible person to fulfil the same, irrespective of his being in majority or in minority....

...However, I would like to say that it requires the cooperation and support of the people, and other political parties should also give their support and cooperation to us. Hon'ble Tyagiji is aware that we have always welcomed their cooperation and support. We have always tried to negotiate with the leaders of opposition parties on every issue and would make an attempt to work together as far as possible. Even today, this is our endeavour and within few days, we have met with the leaders of the opposition parties thrice to solve the arising problems. And, I would like to appreciate their wisdom and full co-operation given to us in solving the difficult problem of East Bengal.

One of our hon. Members, perhaps Shri Kaul, said that so far we had only made long term programmes, and now it was high time that we should see what was afoot. This is not absolutely correct. If we do not formulate long term programmes, things would go beyond reach and future requirements may not be fulfilled. You must be knowing that whatever difficulties we face in the field of industry or in housing programmes or in setting up more schools, or godowns for foodgrains, can simply be attributed to the scarcity of iron and steel. If you say that we should not give any attention to the problems related to the scarcity of steel, then it cannot do any good to the nation. It is essential to produce these things even if we have to face some hardships as these are the bases of our economy. For instance, we can take the example of a school going child. We send our child to school but he does not start earning immediately but we know that it is necessary to educate him irrespective of the time it may take. Thus there are some basic things which a nation cannot ignore but at the same time we have to give due attention to the programmes relating to primary education, solving the problem of unemployment, removing slums in the cities and constructing houses in the rural as well as urban areas. This will serve two purposes. It will fulfil the needs of people and will create job opportunities for unemployed people. This is our earnest effort. Some Members mentioned that the amount of Rs. 50 crore, earmarked for this purpose, is not adequate. I agree with them but this is not the whole programme.

We have to tackle the problem of unemployment keeping in view the overall picture of our economy. It can be solved only when our economy is strengthened. This programme is a little effort in that direction. We have to strengthen this programme. But it should not be mistaken that this is the whole programme. In fact we have to expand this programme and we should also contemplate about other programmes. But at the same time we should also keep an eye on other programmes and should make necessary changes in them.

An hon. Member of D M.K. party raised a question that we should not use symbols in the elections. But he must know that we are also moving ahead in this direction. In the past, it used to be the symbol only and now symbol and name of the candidate are used, but we hope that with the increasing literacy there will be no need of symbol and only the name of the candidate will be there.

He quiet often raises a very important question about Centre-State relations. There are a number of rules laid down in this regard in our present Constitution and many more are likely to be framed in future. But rules are immaterial in this regard. It depends upon mutual cooperation and friendly attitude. If there are cordial relations between the two, work will go on smoothly but if not, rules are of no use.

We see that rules often become binding and produce hindrances instead of helping out and opening new ways, because at the time of framing them no one knows what problem can arise after five years. Nobody can foresee financial problems. I think if we take up the issues of our States from national point of view then there cannot be any difficulty in working together. In fact, problems exist because of the resource crunch. There is scarcity of everything, scarcity of finances, scarcity of steel and scarcity of other necessary things. That is why all the States get dissatisfied with the shares they get and every State Government thinks that injustice is being done to it. Even the prosperous and developed States think so. Therefore, if we work together for the development of the country every State would get an adequate share.

Today the main problems which we are facing are of unemployment and rising prices. There are some reasons for unemployment as I said a little while ago. The unemployment had increased because some industrial units were closed down during the past few years. Now, we hope that our new programmes and schemes will solve out this problem gradually. It cannot be done overnight. Now we think that whatever programmes and schemes we take up, we should see how many jobs can be created for the illiterate masses in rural areas and educated youths. The formulation of these programmes is specially aimed at benefitting small farmers living in rural areas and also who are landless. A provision of Rs. 235 crore has been earmarked for them. Besides, the financial institutions which provide loan will give a Rs. 300 crore for such small projects as also to rural labourers. A sum of Rs. 150 crore has been earmarked for the farmers living in the drought prone areas. All these programmes are just a beginning, and I hope that several other programmes will be formulated later on.

Our colleague Shri Gurupadaswami mentioned about a project involving Rs. 100 crore but he did not say anything as to from where the money will come. It is easier to make a list of works to be done, but when there is disparity and paucity of funds, we have to assess which item is more important and which one is of lesser importance. That is what is meant by planning. There are a lot of things to be done but we have to see the priority of each work.

Similarly, some people have said that nationalisation of banks has not benefited the poor at all. I have heard this time and again. However, these people have perhaps not taken into account the benefits being made available by banks to common man. Small farmers who could never utilise bank facilities in the past, are now deriving good benefits. They are, of course, not getting as much benefit as they deserve, but the point is that it is not possible to extend these benefits to each and every person. Moreover, I agree that the process needs to be simplified further. Nevertheless, our approach has been in a right direction and if so far there has been any slackness in it, the right course for us should be to speed up the process rather than to change our approach.

Several of our colleagues have again raised the issue as to why the foreign banks and other remaining Indian banks, operating here are not nationalised. Now I would not like to take up this issue because there has already been a detailed discussion in the House on this matter on two occasions and I have already given my reply.

I was much surprised to notice that some of our hon. colleagues are perhaps under the impression that people will believe everything that is uttered here. One of our colleagues belonging to the C.P.M. said that the Government of India was using Naxalites. I think that nobody either inside the House or outside will ever believe such things.

Shri Ahmad and others also did speak on the land reform programme. You all are aware that the Government attach much importance to it. I could not make out as to what was the opinion of our colleague regarding the provisions in the land reform programme. There is no denying the fact that several atrocities have been committed on small and landless farmers belonging to Scheduled Castes communities and on those who live in rural areas. It is continuing even now. I am sorry to say that no State is exception to such incident. If anyone says that his State is an exception to it, then he is not saying the truth. If any progress has to be made in villages, the first thing that is required is to undertake land reforms there. The land ceiling is not the only issue involved in it, there are several other issues also. The Government is considering whether they are owners of land or not, and there are several other things as well.

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Something has been done in West Bengal. Chief Ministers of other States are also trying to make such rules. I hope that all other political parties here will take interest in initiating these reforms in their respective States at the earliest.

We are often compared with Japan and other developed countries. Japan is a small country. Two years back it celebrated the centenary of achieving cent percent literacy. Comprising our progress achieved in the last 20 years with that of Japan will not be fair. The condition prevalent there is totally different. Culture of the people of Japan is entirely different. Whatever progress has been made over, that can mainly be attributed to the land reforms because when American troops were stationed there, the first thing they did was that they forcibly implemented some land reforms there. Iran, where there is no socialistic pattern of Government, has also done a commendable job in the field of land reforms. It has so far not been possible to provide any benefit to rural masses in any part of the world without simultaneously implementing land reforms.

It is natural for every one to be worried about the rising prices. The Government of India is also very much concerned about it, and all efforts are being made to contain it. Ours being a developing economy, prices are bound to go up slightly. In this context if we take into account the condition prevailing in other countries we can hardly find a country where the prices had not gone up during the past three years. May be, it is England, America or any other European country. The prices have been increasing everywhere in the poor countries also. It has posed a heavy burden on us as well, because poverty is more acute

here and people have no strength to bear this burden. So we should try our best in this regard, and we are considering on this line sincerely.

Industrial peace is very essential here. We are making efforts to hold talks with the management and leaders of Trade Unions so as to come at some agreement. This agreement should be based on production. At the same time we should see that justice is done to the labourers. It should also be our bounden duty to ensure their contribution in production to improve Country's wealth. If we cooperate in this way, we can change the industrial picture of the country. I never said that poverty will be eradicated soon or it will disappear by magic. Nobody understands it. I also did not say that we alone can eradicate poverty. I have always said in this august House and at other places that it is a national problem and we welcome all of you to come forward and help in eradicating this problem. The problem of poverty did not come up today. No particular party is responsible for this. It is a prolonged malady of the country. This programme is placed before the country. If the people march ahead with this programme thinking it as their own work, then the poverty could be eradicated soon. Even today, I make an appeal to all of you to accept this programme and to cooperate in this regard so that we could complete such a big task. It is the duty of opposition to oppose this work and we welcome their views if they point out our mistakes or loopholes. They can speak to the extent they want but at the same time if they try to solve the national problems, it can be solved early and effectively.

The problem of East Bengal is before everyone of us. I don't want to say anything about it. It is not that there is nothing to say about it. It is also not that I am not distressed and anguished over it, rather we have moved a resolution in both the Houses in which our feelings have been expressed. Now whatever we say or do should be examined with the views that we should not be satisfied by simply presenting our views and it should not be like this, but we should consider whether our action will affect them, help them or will it increase their problems ? We have to tackle this problem in this manner and I assure that I will pay attention to it.

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Arthik Swaraj*

Mr. Chairman, may I begin by apologising because during the first day of Parliament, I have been exceedingly busy and it has not been possible for me to attend this debate as much as I should have liked to do and to hear all the hon. Members. But as the hon. Members know, I can listen to their speeches even in my office and a detailed note of every speech is given to me at the end of the day.

May I say how sad I was to see a group of our countrymen not only showing disrespect to our President, but not even pausing in their demonstration to join in the tribute which was paid to our gallant jawans and officers ?

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I am not an expert on Marxism. But I have read a little bit of it and I wonder whether these people have not strayed from the scientific humanism which Marx propagated.

Let me deal with some of the points made here. There were charges of rigged elections in West Bengal. Of course, some hon. Members have already replied very forcefully and effectively to these charges. But I should like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that these charges underwent a curious enlargement as time went by. In the first allegation of intimidation, only 35 polling stations were mentioned; then, it became 35 constituencies and, later still, the charge has been extended to the entire State. I am sorry to say that the Jana Sangh also seems suddenly to have decided to follow the same line, namely, that the elections have not been fair. We all know that due processes of law are available to test the legality of such allegations. The question is whether the hon'ble Members are interested in fair elections or whether they want to look like martyrs when the people have turned against them.

One hon. Member—this, of course, is not a part of this debate—wrote to me about a particular incident which took place in West Bengal, accusing that the Police and the CRP were in league with my Party against the CPM and that is why when in an incident bombs etc. were hurled at CPM workers the Police took no action. However, when the incident was inquired into, a member of the same party made this statement that a police van fortunately came to the spot at the time of occurrence and that saved the situation from further deterioration. I think I should leave this matter there.

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *R.S., Deb.*, 20 March, 1972, cc. 160-69.

Now, our friends opposite, of the Jana Sangh, have a kind of obsessive desire to appear as super-patriots, as if the rest of us are not at all concerned with the advance of the country or the sovereignty of the country or the well-being of the people, But, fortunately, our people have seen through their propaganda and they have not been taken in by them. During the election campaign and, I believe, in this House also, mention has been made about their attitude towards our unilateral offer of cease-fire. It was shocking that someone even made the accusation that the cease-fire offer was made at the behest of the Soviet Union. Now, anybody is free to say whatever he wants. But, I think, there cannot be any clearer demonstration of the strength, unity and nobility of the Indian nation than this offer. During my very extensive travels in India. I saw for myself, the thrill which the people had felt and that we were not only for our achievements during the last year, but also in fact that at the very moment of victory, we were able to rise above all petty considerations and were able to see the long-term interests of our country as well as of peace on the sub-continent. So, to state that the offer was made at the behest of foreign pressure, whether by the Soviet Union or the United States of America, is, a calumny against the people of India.

During the last session of Parliament, I have already spoken regarding our discussions with the leaders of the Opposition on this question. So have various members of the Opposition who were present at the meeting. Therefore it is not necessary to pursue this.

Shri Bhandari made the most fantastic charge that by not acting earlier in Bangladesh, it is we who are responsible for the death of three million Bangladesh people. I think his argument was that we should have marched into Bangladesh in March or April last. The main people who are concerned are the people of Bangladesh and I think this House has seen in the newspapers what their views are regarding this matter. Normally I would not have mentioned this at all. However some things said by Opposition parties are repeated in other countries and create a wrong impression about India or about our intentions and our policies. Neither the Jan Sangh nor any group or any individual should make the mistake of contending that the freedom of Bangladesh is a gift from India. It is not. It is the achievement of the people of Bangladesh themselves. It is an achievement of the indomitable women and men, young and old; it is the fruit of the sacrifices which they have made.

We have read many stories of atrocities in our newspapers and in the foreign press. But they are nothing as to what one hears there. It is so horrible. Even though people have described what they have seen, it is difficult to believe that any human being could act in such a way to another man or woman. The liberation was the achievement of the people of Bangladesh. And it was only when Pakistan made the supreme folly of attacking us across our own frontiers that we have to defend our territorial integrity. From that point, the war of the people of Bangladesh for attaining their freedom and the war of the people of India to defend their freedom became one. Any hasty action at an earlier stage would have brought incalculable harm to India and possibly not led to the results of which we are now so proud.

I come now to the main Address. The President has given a realistic picture of our efforts as they have progressed year after year, for the transformation of our socio-economic

structure in accordance with our declared objectives. At no time have we claimed that all these objectives could be achieved immediately. We do realise the difficulties we are going to face and the hard work that has to be put in. I myself have been hammering this point all these years at every single meeting where I have spoken. In the President's address, Parliament and the country have been kept informed of the slow progress, for instance, in the industrial field. But the theme of the Address is that in spite of the gigantic problems we have had to face all along, and more especially the law and order problem, we have not made any excuses to slow down the pace of our socio-economic programmes. The dominant theme of the Address is 'Arthik Swaraj'.

Some people have accused us of wishful thinking. I remember earlier how many times in India and abroad my father was accused of having his head in the clouds. But I should like to assure hon. Members that the call for self-reliance is not a mere slogan. It is not wishful thinking. On the contrary, it seeks to give sharp focus to a time bound programme of scientific meausres which the Government have already formulated in some detail and will implement with the same determination which we showed during the critical months of November and December.

In the contemporary world, "self–reliance" does not mean total self-sufficiency in all lines of production. It does mean that where we have the capacity where we have the know–how, we should not take anything from outside, but should try to earn increasingly from our exports to pay for essential imports is which may be needed to sustain the economy at a reasonably high level of productivity. It means the total emotional involvement of all those engaged in the process of production, labour management and governmental agencies at different levels, which are concerned with the regulation of the economy.

During the recent conflict, our people have demonstrated their ability to rise above their sectional differences and interests and unitedly face the national problem and work. for national goals and objectives. I see no reason why the same spirit should not be generated to achieve this national objective. This is not only urgent for the well-being of the poor but also from the point of view of our defence and security. We have all along been stressing the point that it is we ourselves who shall have to bear the main brunt of the efforts needed to restructure and modernise our economy and that foreign aid can at best play only a supplementary and supporting role. We ourselves have wanted to make a sincere effort to cut down on foreign aid. Fortunately some of the countries themselves are helping us in this effort.

The President's Address has identified some sectors in which increased production should contribute significantly to a reduction in our dependence on external aid. There was special mention of steel, fertilisers, cotton and oilseeds. These are the areas in which we have considerable domestic capability and yet we have been depending on imports. There is no reason why we should not be able to increase their production. In fact, some states have assused that they have already taken up this programme and they think that within a short time we will be fully self-sufficient in these spheres also.

In his Address, the President has called for a moratorium on strikes and lock-outs. The President himself is personally taking a great interest in this matter and has been speaking and meeting people. At any time for any country a hold-up in production would be unfortunate but especially for our country at this particular cross-roads of our development it would be most unfortunate. Unfortunate is a very mild word to use I think history will not forgive us if we permit any interruption of production, on account of strikes or lock-outs in the present cicumstances when our national self-respect demands that we should free ourselves from any dependence on others. I have full faith in our people and have no doubt that their sense of patriotism will assert itself in fields and factories. A major factor which aggravates our economic inequality is unemployment and underemployment and hon. Members have rightly stressed these points in their speeches. The Plan is an instrument to increase employment opportunities and in the long term accelerated economic growth is the only effective answer. At the same time it is true that a proper strategy for development which is built around the problem of unemployment is necessary. We have taken certain supplementary measures to stimulate employment through specially designed programmes such as small farmers development programme, schemes for marginal farmers, landless labourers, rural works programme in drought–prone areas, schemes for dry farming areas, etc. and these programmes are expected to generate in the aggregate employment to the extent of two million man-hours per year. Our endeavour now is to ensure that these programmes are implemented more energetically. The 60-crore crash programme for rural employment will, I am told, make a greater impact on employment in the rural areas in the remaining two years of the Plan. As hon. Members are aware it always takes a little time for any scheme or programme to get going, that is for the work to start. Before it can make an impact or show results some time is needed.

Under the programme for alleviating unemployment among the educated, schemes have been sanctioned for the expansion and improvement of the quality of primary education through the appointment of additional teachers, rural engineering surveys, agro-service centres, development of consumer cooperatives, preparation of road projects and rural water supply schemes and schemes for special support to small entrepreneurs. We have now decided that these programmes should be continued in the remaining two years of the Fourth Plan. Government have also proposed to initiate other programmes for the training and absorption of personnel such as engineers, technicians and post-graduates. Further allocation is proposed to be made to State Governments on a matching basis for the formulation of special employment programmes. These new programmes will be taken up in 1972-73 and will be financed out of the lump sum provision of Rs. 125 crores which was indicated by the Finance Minister in his Budget speech. It is estimated that these special programmes will benefit about $3\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs of educated unemployed.

Notice has been given of a number of amendments about monopoly houses, the functioning of the M.R.T.P. Act and the need to nationalise various industries, specially those belonging to the monopoly houses. Now I have indicated my views on a number of occasions in this House and elsewhere on the question of nationalisation. The Government is neither adverse to nor afraid of nationalisation. But nationalisation has to fit into our overall scheme of priorities with reference to the changing conditions of our economy. We shall nationalise an industry or a unit if it is essential to strengthen the control of the

public sector over the economy. That is why 14 major banks were nationalised, and later the General Insurance companies. We shall also not hesitate to nationalise (any) unit or industry when there is evidence that it is being managed to the detriment of the national interest. That is why we took over the management of certain coking coal mines and of copper. Nationalisation is one amongst many instruments at the disposal of Government to curb concentration of economic power in private hands, and we resort to it after a careful assessment of the efficacy of the other instruments available, in a given situation. We always consider that the extension of the public sector could be an effective countervailing force in checking concentration of economic power. The more active role which public financial institutions are now seeking in the management of enterprises in which they have substantial financial interests is also directed towards the same end. So far as the industrial houses are concerned, our policy has been spelt out in the M.R.T.P. Act as well as in the industrial licensing policy. We have delineated the fields in which these houses will be allowed to expand further, and wherever there is a possibility of choice between a larger house on the one hand and a medium house or a new entrepreneur on the other, Government have favoured the latter. But, sometimes no such medium house or a new entrepreneur is available, and there is also no immediate possibility of any public sector unit, and in these cases we have sometimes allowed the large industrial houses to come in, because specially where the State is a backward one we find that there is a great deal of frustration and the feeling that they have been discriminated against because other States earlier had opportunities which, are now being denied to them. The denial of licences for expansion in such cases would mean loss of production and perhaps involve larger imports to meet the domestic need. We must simultaneously pursue a number of economic objectives, a fast rate of industrial expansion, economic self-reliance, industrial development of backward areas, creation of opportunities for employment of different types of people. But while doing so, we have also to keep in view the strain on resources, financial as well as managerial, specially the latter. Hon. Members will appreciate that economic policy-making has to strike a very delicate balance between the several and sometimes conflicting objectives keeping in view both the short-term and the long-term needs of the economy.

Having said all this I must confess that as a lay person—economists in this House may quarrel with me as those outside sometimes do—I do have a strong feeling that the present economic thinking is not solving the problems of contemporary society anywhere, not only in India but in the world. What other countries do is their concern, but we in India must devise an economic system which makes sense in our social setting. Our progress must be judged not by the GNP or the various other criteria which are put forward such as the number of cars on the road. I mention cars not because I think them important but recently I have read about three or four articles on China and other countries and a criterion for assessing standards is the number of cars, whether there are too few in some places or too many in other places and so on. Our progress must be measured by the extent to which our programmes and goods are able to reach the poorest and the most needy. Therefore, an entirely fresh outlook on economic theory and its implementation is needed.

I am not dwelling on the question of prices and so on because this has been talked about at greater length elsewhere. Hon. Members know that we are trying to hold foodgrain prices. They also know of the large sums which are spent on procurement and on ensuring

fair distribution. I was amazed to hear that some Members have spoken about starvation. Now, we have been through periods of famine. We have tried to prevent starvation and I think the whole world has realised what a tremendous job was done in preventing starvation and in raising our food output. There is a great poverty in India. Nobody denies it, but it is also true that there is no longer that degree of poverty which existed here before independnece. We have moved forward and it is of no use counting the paise that people earn. It can be seen on the faces of the people when you visit villages and even remote areas, how they are dressed, how bright the children's faces are, what their reactions are when spoken to and so many other things. I would plead with the hon. opposition Members certainly not only they should criticise the Government. It is their main job to criticise the Government, its programmes and policies, but they should not in any way minimise the achievements of the nation, as this can only weaken national confidence and national determination.

Our foreign policy has been one of friendship. It remains so. There is no weakness or drift in it. The President has clearly stated that, while we ourselves do not seek leadership or domination, we cannot tolerate any outside interference in our own affairs. Some nations have not always been friendly and have even sought to provoke us, but we have excluded none from the circle of our friendship. We do not dwell on the past. We think that every day can bring new opportunities and we have taken initiatives. We sincerely hope for a genuine response.

The Congress party has secured major victories in the elections and this naturally is bound to give rise to feelings of sadness or disappointment in other parties, but I am sorry that this should lead to any talk of the boycott of Legislatures. Although there is much that divides us, I personally believe that there is much that unites us. These are our main objectives. I think nobody will quarrel with the objective of our national policy which is to eradicate poverty, to remove economic backwardness, to bring about social equality. In the external sphere, our objective is to have an India which stands strongly for its independence and sovereignty, an India which will not bow its head to any power, however big, an India which will keep intact its integrity and keep aloft its national pride. I think I have covered most of the points although I have not gone into details. This is the time, when our major objectives have to be looked at with a new outlook by the Opposition parties as well. I think they will notice that there is a mood of optimism, a mood of self-confidence, all over the country. We can use this feeling and this atmosphere to build. We are at the stage when we have the capacity to build. We have talked about self-reliance, we have talked about so many things.We have sincerely believed in them. But at no time have we had the capacity to go towards those goals as we have today. Before, these were the goals, but distant goals. Today they are not distant goals; they are within our reach. And if we unite instead of quarrelling over various small points or just trying to be little one another, I think this country has a great future and we can all share in building it and in taking it forward. Thank you.

Self - Reliance*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I find myself in rather a strange situation because, normally, I should have liked to make a scathing reply to the accusing remarks made from the other side, but I do not like to hit people when they are down, and it was obvious from several of the speeches made from the opposition side that they are indeed—some of them—in the depths of depression. One or two of the speeches that I listened to gave me the impression that the speakers had high fever or some such ailment...(*Interruptions*) I think, I am being very meek...(*Interruptions*).

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If I can bring down the fever, then I shall certainly be happy.**

Dr. Karni Singh, another friend opposite, is also in the Opposition and I think that the House knows that he is storngly opposed to our policies. No doubt he will remain opposed to them and he has, of course, to do so. But his speech was a balanced one, perhaps because he is a sportsman and has learnt to play the game.

Some hon. Members spoke at length about democracy, but it seemed to me that, to them there is democracy while they are winning and things are on their side, but no democracy if they do not win. Then something is wrong with democracy. It is for the House to judge whether this is a proper definition of the word. (*Interruptions*)

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I do not want to enter into a controversy with the hon. gentleman opposite,*** but we all know that the Marxist definition of democracy has never been the same as that even of the rest of the Opposition. There is no point in entering into a controversy.

Some of our friends opposite have always been prophets of gloom, not recently but for many years, long before I became Prime Minister or came into the Government.

Some of these old habits are difficult to shake of. But, I do feel that to threaten violence in the manner it is sometimes done here or even to threaten mass Satyagraha is not very responsible talk. And certainly, you can't have mass Satyagraha against the masses.

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *L.S. Deb.*, 4 April, 1972, cc. 149 -64.

** Replying to Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu's remark : "When you find fever in your opposition bench, naturally you are".

*** Replying to Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu's remark : "By use of official machinery."

This debate has ranged over a number of days, perhaps longer than I remember in previous sessions. Many points made were common to those made in the Budget debate. A large number of subjects have been covered but I shall confine myself only to the broader issues. Many of the points have, of course, been replied to by Members who spoke from our own side and sometimes by the Members of the Opposition Parties also....(*Interruptions*). Members of Parliament are expected to have a slightly longer memory.

A few speakers stressed the point that instead of removing poverty we are removing the Opposition. I don't think observations of this kind help to strengthen democracy because they indicate a certain lack of confidence in the judgement of the people. I refuse to take the blame for the failure of the Opposition parties at the polls.

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It has also been said that we have exploited the Bangladesh issue in the elections. But I should like to remind the hon. Members that we have had elections even before this issue came up, before the war had begun or even before the public knew about the movement in Bangladesh. We know the results of those elections also...

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There was a General Election in West Bengal*. The Bangladesh issue did make a difference but what made a difference even more than what happened in Bangladesh was the propaganda made by some Opposition parties against our Bangladesh policy. I might tell the hon. Member—I am sorry, I am digressing a bit—I have received letters from people saying that they have consistently supported the Marxists but that they were so shocked by what was being said in this election that although they might not vote for Congress, they would not vote for the CPM.

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Signed ones, with address and all complete.**

Hence people have voted overwhelmingly for us. They have voted before. Certainly Bangladesh has made a difference. But the plain fact is that they are full of confidence. They do believe that a beginning has been made. They do think that this Government is capable of taking determined and resolute action and this is why they have voted for us. I entirely agree with the friends opposite when they say that if we do not live up to all we have promised and if we do not deliver the goods, the people will not vote for us again. That is quite obvious and is part of democracy. This is the challenge before us all but it is not a challenge merely to the Government. It is important to us whether we form the

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* Replying to Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu's remark : "In West Bengal".

** Replying to Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu's remark : "Signed ones?"

government or somebody else does, but, what is more important is that what needs to be done for the Indian people, is done. If other people can do this, I shall not stand in their way.

It is often said that if a particular word or term is not repeated it is forgotten. Yesterday I heard a speech wherein it was stated that the word socialism had now been given the go-by. It has not been given the go-by neither have socialism nor *garibi hatao* nor any of the slogans which we have been raising. All our programmes and the progress we make will show that they are not forgotten, but, it is true that slogans or words have to be viewed differently at different times. We have moved forward from our previous position. We are in the midst of implementing these programmes. We do raise slogans even now, but we are also fully involved in implementing them. Just because a particular Address does not make mention of a phrase or word this does not mean for a second that we have diverted from our basic objectives or even from our short-term programmes.

When we speak about the removal of poverty, we must also remember... that the concept of poverty and of the needs of the people is a changing one. People are demanding more than they did even 5 years ago. They are demanding more and the whole poverty line is a moving one. What might have satisfied people a few years ago is not going to satisfy them now and that is only right.

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It is moving upwards, not sideways*. (*Interruptions*) I would like to assure the House that I do not believe in regimentation. I think that it is good that we have people of different shapes and sizes, that we have different customs and cultural practices. They all add to the spice of life.

Progress has to be viewed in terms of the minimum requirements of the majority of our people who are poor, and not only in terms of the luxuries of a very few and even not, I would say, of the extras of the numbers who are in between. We have to make a far greater effort in helping those who are at the very lowest level. While I have said that the poverty-line has moved, I must confess that those who are at the very bottom have benefited the least and there are some, who have not benefited at all. It was necessary to build an infra-structure and this is what we were concerned with all these years. I think that we have succeeded in doing this to a large extent, and we are now at a stage when we can push forward with a massive programme to meet these needs and to provide the basic amenities to our people.

Hon. Members have in their speeches understandably voiced concern about prices and in the notices for amendments. Amongst our economic objectives, Government attaches very high priority to reasonable price stability. I do not claim that our attempts in this regard have been wholly successful.

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* Replying to Shri Piloo Mody's remark : "Moving upwards or downwards ?"

I would request hon. Members, including even those sitting on the other side, to objectively analyse the factors which govern the price situation and not to exaggerate the extent of the price rise....

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...because, I think that such over-statements as are sometimes made only strengthen the inflationary psychology in the country.

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Economic analysts, many of whom were prophesing all kinds of dire consequences and a breakdown of the economy of India only a very short time ago, have now expressed welcome surprise at the manner in which we have been able to control the price line, in spite of the extraordinary expenditure which had to incur last year.

Of course, there has been a rise in prices. Nobody is denying this. But it is accepted that it has been contained within reasonable limits, and this is a measure of the success of the various steps which we took last year, such as the regulation of credit, the banning of forward trading in certain commodities, timely and selective imports of essential raw materials and above all, the mobilisation of larger resources to meet our commitments on refugees relief, defence etc.

Some hon. Memebrs have asked why we need, still require large resources since the refugees have now returned ? But I do not think I need to dwell on this matter. Every one is fully aware of the additional burdens which we still have to bear.

The policy that we have steadfastly followed since the beginning of the Fourth Plan of building up adequate buffer stocks of foodgrains has also paid dividends. In spite of floods in Northern India, and drought in some parts of the south, our stocks of foodgrains are now at a record level, and this augurs well for the stability of foodgrains' prices and this will no doubt have a stabilising effect on the cost of living. But hon. Members must give deeper thought to this matter, because we must maintain a reasonable balance between the interests of purchasers and the consumers. I feel that farmer who have large marketable surpluses should be willing to share some of their gains of increased productivity with consumers. The maintenance of higher prices for farm produce at artificially higher levels can only generate pressures for higher prices elsewhere in the economy and this cannot be in the interests of the farmers themselves in the long run. I hope hon. Members will take an integrated view of the whole problem of prices when they consider the question of remunerative prices for agricultural produce.

In regard to the fixation of prices of manufactured goods also, we should give up the cost-plus approach which has in the past made things easy for inefficient producers because they are not forced to resort to more prudent management of resources and to reduce their costs. So, whatever decision we take on individual prices, these should subserve the interests of the national economy as a whole and not seek to benefit any one section at the cost of the other.

I fully support the emphasis which hon. Members have laid on the urgent need to multiply employment opportunities. A major breakthrough on this front in the next three or four years is absolutely essential if we are to establish the viability of our political and economic system.

More than any other factor, it is unemployment which aggravates poverty and creates frustration particularly amongst the young and educated. A more egalitarian social order cannot be built unless employment opportunities for gainful employment are more widely distributed. A high rate of economic growth can itself solve some of the problems of unemployment. But I do not subscribe to the proposition that only a high rate of growth can solve our problems and that we can afford to leave unemployment to the tender mercies of such growth. The experience of many developed countries has shown that unemployment and high rate of growth can and do co-exist in many of these countries. We should not get enmeshed in economic jargon on these matters. An entirely new outlook has to be evolved. In this I hope we shall have the co-operation of all. I hope soon to call a meeting of the Leaders of the Opposition so that we can exchange views on some of these matters.

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That was a very long time ago and much water has flowed down the Ganga and other rivers since then.*

Therefore, full employment or fuller employment is one of the central objectives of our plan. Special programmes have to be undertaken to supplement the opportunities for employment generated by the Plan. Hon. Members know that a number of programmes of this nature were initiated earlier. I know that all of them have not gathered momentum, but they are now beginning to do so, and I think their effect will soon be felt.

The Budget also shows further evidence of Government's earnestness in tackling this problem. The Annual Plan for 1972-73 provides for an appreciable increase in development outlays in the public sector and this should bring about material improvement in the tempo of economic activity in the private sector also. The additional provision of Rs. 125 crores made in the Plan will enable Government to implement a number of new employment oriented schemes which would, at the same time, meet some of the basic needs of our people such as drinking water supply, housing, roads and so on.

As I have said earlier, as we gain experience, as we implement these schemes successfully, more employment opportunities will automatically open out, we shall be able to harness our enormous manpower, skilled as well as unskilled and dovetail employment with programmes for the removal of poverty.

But for all this, we need massive investment which can only come out of higher domestic savings, hard work and increased productivity. This will be feasible only if all of us accept the imperative need for greater efficiency and set about achieving it in all

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* Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's question, "What has happened to the Committee on Planning ? There used to be a Prime Minister's Committee on Planning".

sectors of our economy. I have been repeating—and I hope I will not be misunderstood if I say it again—that those who are employed have a special obligation to the unemployed. I do appreciate the difficulties, I do sympathise with the difficulties of those who have demands; but at the same time, if we are to give in to the demands of these limited numbers we do take away from the resources available for the very much larger number who are seeking employment. So let not one group of people, even though they may not be affluent, be exploiters of the unemployed. Workers, particularly those in the organised sector, should recognise that by keeping the wheels of industry moving without interruption, they can make a very significant contribution to economic growth and thus to the creation of greater employment. If we have called for a moratorium on strikes and lock-outs, it is not for the benefit of those who control industrial units; it is for the benefit of the nation and specially for those who are the least privileged sections.

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It all goes together.* If production rises, then that will affect prices.

The President's Address has emphasised self-reliance as one of the major objectives of high priority. Our friend opposite has reminded us, although we needed no such reminding, that none of these objectives are new objectives. If he takes the trouble to read my speeches, I have said this almost in every speech I have made, whether to limited audience or to vast public gatherings. The Congress has stood for self–reliance from the beginning; the Congress has stood for socialism and all these things. But, as I said earlier, when we said these things earlier, they were not on the horizon; they were only distant goals. Now we have moved forward and we are very much closer to the goal. So, the slogan is the same; the objective is the same; but naturally as we proceed towards it, the attitude has to change; new programmes and new steps have to be undertaken.

The hon. Member opposite gave such fulsome praise to my father yesterday, a few minutes ago I said that Members of Parliament should have better memories; but perhaps they are privileged not to have any memory. Quite often they contradict themselves. I remember some of the speeches when my father was Prime Minister, and I do not remember having the same fulsome praise in those days. In fact, the criticism was very much on the lines of what the hon. Member** said yesterday. (*Interruptions*). Anyway, I welcome the support which the hon. Members and the people at large have extended to our policy of self-reliance. (*Interruptions*).

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We must be clear as to what we mean by self-reliance, because every word is given different meaning. No nation, not even the most affluent one, can insulate its economy. All nations are interdependent to a certain extent; they must share services and goods, and India certainly will need considerable time to absorb improved technologies and equipment

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* Replying to Shri Indrajit Gupta's remark : "What about a moratorium on prices and profits?".

** Shri Indrajit Gupta.

from outside. But we want to pay for those goods and services, increasingly through our own export earnings, and we must always see that through this outside and, whether it is of know–how or material, other influences should not infiltrate. We shall always be vigilant about that.

Our increase in exports is largely dependent on the economic policies of developed countries; and in particular, on the provision of fair opportunities of access to their market. So, in co-operation with other under-developed countries, we shall seek just solutions for our own trading problems. However, in the ultimate analysis, the success of our export promotion efforts will be determined by the overall efficiency of our own economy and the extent to which we can keep down our costs.

Import substitution is equally important. The President's Address has identified some of the specific sectors in which import substitution is of critical importance. To give examples, the production of an extra million tonnes of steel in the current year is well within our reach if all those engaged in this industry, management as well as labour, will bend their energies to this task and function unitedly for the achievement of our national goal. (*Interruptions*) I can assure hon. Members that the Minister is certainly bending all his energies.

Much is said about the grant of industrial licences to the large houses. Our policy is quite clear on this. We are not going back on it. What has been done is that when there is no suitable medium or new entrepreneur and when no one comes forward in what are called the core or heavy investment sectors or export-oriented industries, in such cases, we have granted industrial licences to the large houses, after satisfying ourselves that they can set up the capacity for the production quickly. This is especially so in regard to backward areas, because otherwise it would mean that we would not be able to set up any industry in those areas and this would not only not help the backward districts to forge ahead, but it would also entail loss of production and involve larger imports to meet rising domestic needs.

Our vision of development is not confined to simple economic development; we feel that it should inculcate pride and contentment in work; it should not only give a sense of participation but genuine involvement to every Indian in the shaping of the country's future.

My hon. friend opposite said yesterday something about hippies. If he knows India at all he should know that this is not a new phenomenon for us. We have our own varieties, we do not call them hippies; perhaps they do not look like hippies. Nevertheless, they do exist and they have been rightly or have wrongly hallowed by history. I personally have an obsession with cleanliness. Also I have nothing to say for those who are drug addicts. However, this question should not be oversimplified. We must realise that many of these hippies have taken positive stands on various issues. Some have become hippies to avoid, for instance, going to Viet Nam to bomb the innocent...(*Interruptions*) I personally do not think that a hippy is in any way worse than somebody whose livelihood is dependent on the exploitation of others, who may observe the outward forms of society but indulge in other undesirable activities. I cannot speak for all hippies, I do not know whether they

all think alike. But certainly some of them are attempting to get away from what is known today as the "concrete jungles" of the big cities of the affluent countries and the limited values of the acquisitive society.

As I was coming to the House an hon. Member on our side requested that I should say a word about the dacoit menace. We are all aware of the seriousness of this problem. Perhaps you know that the Home Ministry is having talks with the concerned States looking into this problem. There are many other matters which are also of importance which I am not going into because it would take too long.

I come now to foreign policy and our unilateral offer of ceasefire. I am not going into the question of who supported and who did not support this measure. Members of the Opposition, or at least representatives of all parties were called. When this discussion came up on an earlier occasion the other Opposition Members contradicted what some have said; I am not going into that matter again.

Our unilateral offer of a ceasefire has been welcomed in all international circles, all over the world; not only that, I have also no hesitation in saying that it has been widely praised within our own country among all sections of the people. The Jan Sangh stand on this matter is typical of its extremely chauvinistic, immature and anti-philosophy of life. So enthusiastic was the popular feeling about the role which the Soviet Union played during the whole crisis of Bangladesh that even the Jan Sangh was compelled to desist from talking against them. But now they seem to have reverted to their earlier passion for bating the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is a friend of India, and we value their friendship. However, any one who imagines that we shall allow ourselves to be dictated to by third parties in our negotiations with Pakistan or in any other matter, foreign or domestic, is quite off the mark. Let me make that quite clear. The Government of India have consistently spoken for and wanted normalisation of relations with Pakistan, and we continue to want it. I took the initiative this time by saying that I would be prepared for talks, and indeed we are in direct touch with Pakistan. One must learn from past experience, but I do not think that one can keep harping on the past I hope that India and Pakistan can both now turn their backs on the era of conflicts and confrontation. Whatever some short-sighted people might say or do, I think that this nation as a whole does desire to live in peace with Pakistan, and indeed with all its neighbours. We have never had any quarrel with the people of Pakistan. They have long suffered, and I think their only mistake was that they believed all the lies that were told to them about India. Perhaps even now they do not have a correct appreciation of our attitude, of what we are in our own country or our desire for friendship with our neighbouring country. I should like them to know that we do not propose to negotiate in any spirit of arrogance, we do not wish to humiliate any one. We should like to discuss matters in a spirit of friendship and co-operation. We have believed that the triumphs of peace are greater than those of war. It is peace we seek, a peace which is enduring, so that we can concentrate on our own affairs, on our own war on poverty.

Negotiations cannot be conducted through speeches or public postures. Channels of communication are available for the exchange of ideas. I believe that Pakistan, Bangladesh and India, working together in a spirit of cooperation and good neighbourliness, can be a

source of strength to one another. We have not become independent to become pawns in other people's hands. If we work together, we can become stronger within our own country, and contribute to the strength of the sub-continent and, I would say, to all the developing countries.

To come back to the national scene, I said earlier that we have had many prophets of gloom and doom.

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If you can think of any other matching or rhyming word, I am willing to accept it.*

But one by one, we have proved them wrong. There were people who thought that we could not become independent through non-violence; there were people who thought that a democratic system could not have a planned economy, there were people who thought that adult franchise would not work where there are large number of illiterates and so on and so forth. There were people who thought we could not survive the split in the party, the Bangladesh crisis. The list is a long one, but one by one we have shown that this country has a sound base and the people are determined to solve their problems in our own way.

My hon. friend opposite, Shyamnandan Babu, is a well-read person. So, I hesitate to quote something to him. I am not good at remembering names of authors, but yesterday when he was speaking a verse came to my mind. I do not remember who has written it. But it says—I am not quoting the poem; I am just telling what it is about : An old man is complaining. He is saying, the steps are so steep; the passage is so dark and other such things. The sympathetic listener pays great attention to him and then remarks, "Well, this may be so. But it is strange that no complaint has come from youth !" Age is not merely a question of years; it is a question of one's outlook. There is no doubt that in the country today, there is a mood of optimism. There is a mood of confidence. There is a feeling that. while the problems are tremendous, they can be solved. Today nobody asks, "Can you do this ? Can India do this ?" Whether from outside or inside whether experts or ordinary people, the question is, "When can this be completed ?" This in itself shows a major step forward.

Too long have some in our country played the game of our enemies by persisting in minimizing our achievement by denigrating our leaders in short, in sapping the confidence and will of our people. We are passing through critical months. (*Interruptions*)... I am not talking about myself; I am talking about previous years. We are neither at war, nor are we completely at peace. Perhaps we are in for a long period of a testing of nerves. In this situation, it is imperative that we all remain calm, cool and united and also that we do not forget the war at home, which is the war against poverty.

A new outlook is needed in dealing with all the old problems as well as with the new challenges which our development and growth are throwing up. Can the hon. Members

* Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's comment, "And bloom".

of the Opposition rise above their frustration and try to look beyond the horizon, so that we can fight and win this battle together ?

We must deal with the problem of economic and social transformation with the same determination that we showed in meeting last year's challenges. This is, as the President has stated, no less heroic and no less essential. In fact, it is a bigger challenge and has to be met at several levels and on many fronts. I sincerely hope that when you recover from the shock of the last month or so, we can all sit down and once more work unitedly for the welfare of our people.

Sir, I request the House to adopt the Motion of Thanks.

Issues Before the Nation*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, some of our friends opposite have called the President's Address a ritual. Now it is not a ritual, it is a requirement of the legislature; it is an assessment of the state of the nation and it indicates the work ahead, as the President has said, for the executive, for Parliament and for the country as a whole. If I may say so, as regards the action of some of our friends opposite who chose to boycott the Address, whatever their motives, whatever the reasons that they have given here, I think the country and the general public have taken it as not merely a protest, but as not honouring the President. I am not using strong words.

Although many Members have declared that this was not their intention, yet this is the way in which the public looks at it. Merely saying something else will not change the situation. Personally I think that it is a disservice to those who have elected the Members, because this is a part of parliamentary procedure, and if I may say so...

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...Have we not been elected for that reason ?

Have the people elected us for some other reason ?

...I consider their abstention an empty ritual. One hon. Member said that there was no juice and colour in the Address. If the hon. Member's idea of juice and colour is what is provided here by the Opposition, I would say that he and they are welcome to it.

The Address has qualities which are far more solid and far more important, that is, truth, earnestness and determination. We have no need to indulge in verbal heroics. This Government, this party and indeed, I would say, the people of India, are deeply immersed in a very heroic task, not an easy task, but a task that needs all the qualities and all the strength of which this nation is capable.

This time last year, we were in the after glow of a war, a war which fully vindicated our ideals, our policies and our judgement. I said then that this crisis, the Bangla Desh–Pakistan crisis, which had overflowed on to our territory was an interruption in our own national battle for economic and social construction.

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *L.S. Deb.*, 27 February, 1973, cc. 292-315.

Hon. Members will perhaps remember that at that time I had also said that our victory would involve a price in the form of great hardship in every field of activity in the country. Each measure we took then had financial and economic implications and it was obvious that the subsequent months would witness the repercussions of what had happened then.

I mention this bit of recent history not to find a scapegoat as one hon. member said, but to put these problems which are serious, grave problems, about which we are all deeply concerned, problems of price rises, of commodity shortages, of economic hardships in their proper perspective. Hardships are there. We know they would come. We had warned the nation, we had warned Parliament. What we had not known and what constituted an added burden and increased our difficulties was the fact of drought. But I have no doubt that the Government and the people of this country will overcome these difficulties, as they overcome the vast challenge that was posed to us in 1971.

The Opposition has a vested interest in Government's failure. But I hope they will also realise that any failure at this point means tremendous increase in hardship on the people. It does not mean a hardship for Government, but it does mean a hardship for the people.

Many Opposition friends are fond of saying that 'you will not be there' or 'this will happen to Government'. I am equally keen on repeating as many times as is necessary that our interest is not in being here, our interest is in pursuing a particular policy and in seeing that that policy succeeds. If in pursuing that policy we do not succeed, it still does not mean that we give up policies which we consider to be right and which we feel have been vindicated by every event that has taken place.

Hon. members would do well to look back at their own speeches which they have been making. Is there any time when they thought the nation would make good ? Is there any time when they thought that anything was succeeding? Yet in spite of those gloomy predictions, we did make good. We did meet the biggest challenge that perhaps any nation, developed, rich, affluent or poor, has faced and we did emerge a stronger country with greater self-confidence.

We are used to these speeches. They have been made today, they will be made tomorrow and they will be made for all time to come. But Government is not going to be diverted from its declared, accepted policy or its programmes. Government has no intention of failing. Government is going to succeed in what it has set before itself. We may have shortfalls, we may have setbacks, as every country, every government, every people do have, had and will continue to have. But we have no doubt at all that we face the future with confidence and that just as we have overcome them, in spite of the gloomy forecasts made by hon. members opposite and many other people in this country and their friends abroad, we are going to come through this with success.

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In 25 years, the country's intrinsic strength and maturity have increased tremendously and have enabled us to face the multitude of challenges. The country must, and will, take the challenges of 1973 in its stride. The Opposition leaders spoke of galloping inflation,

of galloping corruption, if I may say so, with galloping rhetoric in the House and outside they have been encouraging disruptive activities of every kind. (*Interruptions*).

*** *** ***

No Please, Shri Mishra, if you will take the trouble to read my speeches, you will find that even at the time of victory, I did not boast of it*. (*Interruptions*).

I would like to remind the hon. Member that the elections were held at the right time.

*** *** ***

Shri Mishra has his own way of judging how our country proceeds.** He might perhaps study what happens with regard to the elections in other countries. In fact, this is the first time we had one election a year ahead. The last elections of the State Assemblies were after due time, just a little later. We had decided that...

We were certainly discussing, but what did we discuss*** ? We discussed that since there was a war we could not have the election. But when the war ended, there was no excuse whatsoever to put off the elections, and therefore, the elections were held.

Now, in the Government, the road is a far too steep and difficult one for us to go galloping it, much as we might like to gallop or cantor. I am afraid the road is far too difficult; the task is far too big a one, and the Government has to work hard.

There is no time for any gallops on this side or that.

The biggest concern, and the immediate concern, before us is naturally the question of organising relief. We have been and we are mobilising all the resources in money and in materials to overcome this crisis. 48 lakhs of people are engaged in relief works in Rajasthan, in Gujarat, in Maharashtra, Mysore, Andhra Pradesh and Tripura. These relief works are being undertaken on a scale never before envisaged. The difficulties are indeed great, but this is the first time that the Government has come forward with such a vast programme of help. About 90,000 different kinds of relief work are under implementation.

The greatest hardship is due to the shortage of water-supply and certain steps have been taken : massive programmes for loans and grants for the digging of wells, for the production of rigs and arrangements for the transportation of water. There is hardship with regard to cattle. Relief camps have been opened. Subsidy or loans for the movement of fodder crops have been arranged from forests. We are trying to search out new items which can be used as fodder; for instance, the tops of sugarcane. There may also be other such items. Rs. 445 crores have been released.

There is also a special food plan for 1973-74 which includes an increase of rabi production and inputs for a higher kharif output.

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* Responding to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark, "You have been doing it".

** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark, "You betrayed the Opposition at the time of Assembly elections..."

*** Answering Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's question, "Were you not discussing with us for postponement ?"

I am sorry that sometimes a case is tried to be made out that we are partial to one State and not to another. We are deeply concerned with the hardships in all parts, wherever they exist in different parts of India, and it is our earnest endeavour to see that all parts are helped equally within the resources which are available to us.

One hon. Member remarked that we always have droughts. If I may submit, such a blanket statement is an exaggeration and an over-simplification of very grave issues involved. The drought this year is not a normal drought. It is a very unusual drought. The very fact that even those countries which are not usually importers of grains have imported enormous quantities shows how many countries have been affected this year.

In fact some agency of the United Nations has taken special cognisance of the fact and is trying to mobilise world-wide resources and funds in order to help the countries which are affected. They have approached us also in this regard. It is as a result of the progress we have made on our agricultural front and our policy of building up buffer stocks that we were able to manage this very difficult year with marginal imports. I do not agree with the hon. friends who feel that there is something shameful in imports. We should like to be self-sufficient but if there is a drought of such magnitude which has affected many people, and if we can help them by imports, we should not consider it as something wrong. Nevertheless we have been able to manage with only marginal imports. I share the agony of the hon. Members at the distress that is being caused in some parts of the country.

I am not one who usually quotes from newspapers nor do I think that what the newspapers print is gospel truth. But hon. Members are very impressed when something comes out in print and since this paper happened to come to me only a few minutes ago, I thought I would read out what a foreign correspondent who has travelled in all the drought affected areas Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Mysore with the exception of Tripura I believe–has said:

> I found the bulk of the Indian farmlands were substantially better prepared than before to withstand the shortage of rain. The green revolution has not failed. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was only a little wrong when she said proudly last year that India has reached self-sufficiency in food.
>
> This is the Christian Science Monitor...

*** *** ***

Our production has gone up. Your* shouting there is not going to change that fact. I do not think that Mr. Piloo Mody could have produced rains at the right time; if he could then I must say it was very remiss of him not to do so just because the Government is not his.

As I said, our economy has the capacity to deal with such situations. What has happened this year is that production of coarse grain in the rained areas has been mainly affected.

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* Referring to Shri Piloo Mody.

There is a steady increase in the production of wheat from year to year because of our development activities. The drought-prone areas of the country need to be dealt with on a separate footing. From the point of view of their overall development, as the House knows, a special group is currently finalising the strategy for the development of such areas and I am sure that in the Fifth Plan it will be possible for us to undertake the programme in a big way.

The other matter of great concern to us is that of the rise in the prices of food. A situation of shortfall in agricultural production has been exploited and a psychology of scarcity has been created by painting every effort that is made as failure even from the beginning, leading to speculation and retention of stocks at various levels. The House knows of our scheme to take over the wholesale trade in wheat from the coming season. This is designed to eliminate some of the factors from our food economy which encourage hoarding and speculation.

I know that this is a major structural reform, which will evoke opposition from interested groups and that every attempt will be made to scuttle it. But Government is determined to face the situation squarely. The State Governments will be enabled to make all administrative and organisational arrangements necessary for the success of the working of this scheme.

The other great problem is that of unemployment. But again, in spite of what some hon. members have chosen to say on the floor of the House, these programmes have not crashed. On the contrary, although they took some time in taking off, they are now in full swing in the States and a large number of people have been provided with employment on worth-while schemes. I do not say that we have solved the entire problem nor had we said that we would be able to do so. All that we had said was that it was a beginning and a help in the midst of a specially difficult situation and that is what has happened. The major effort made in this direction in the last two years and the achievements gained so far cannot be simply brushed aside. It is Government's determination to go ahead and expand these programmes in the coming year, as announced in the President's Address.

Some people, of course, have made up their minds that nothing can succeed and the minute a programme is announced they start announcing what a big failure it is, even before it has begun to function and they start deriding the programme.

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I am afraid the experience is rather limited, with all due respect to the hon. Member.* Let me say modestly that the programmes launched by Government have succeeded to some extent. (*Interruptions*).

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Had we not succeeded, we could not have faced the challenge**. You cannot get away from that, no matter how much you try. This time two years ago hon. Members were all

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* Replying to a Member's remark : "It is based on past experience".

** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark : "What is the success ?"

saying that we could not face the Bangladesh situation. Well, now it is proved that we did face it. I say here and now that two years hence we will show that everything you have said today was wrong.

In the field of power, a group of Ministers have looked into the whole question during the last few months, and as a result of various studies that have been made, a concrete programme of obtaining additional power of nearly 500 MW by May, 1973 from the existing thermal generating plants has been drawn up. Production programmes for all the generation plants will be drawn up within the next three months and implemented in a coordinated and time-bound manner. Selected power projects will be accelerated to obtain an additional capacity of about 1300 MW by the end of 1973 and another 1750 MW by the end of 1974. The transmission projects necessary for this will also be accelerated. I am sorry for the difficulties which the Tamil Nadu Government is facing, but let me say that they are not more than those being faced by U.P. or Punjab or Haryana and perhaps some other States as well, just to quote a few instances. Effective measures will be taken for the linkage of power plants with coal mines and rail transport and control room operations for this purpose. These measures have already begun.

Similarly time-bound action programmes have been drawn up for fertilisers etc. Our public enterprises have had their share of teething trouble and opposition members should be happy, because it gave them many talking points all these years. But now these enterprises are about to make good.

One hon. Member has spoken of uncertainty in the industrial climate. I think the answer to that is that there are some people who always feel uncertain, I do not know what we can do to make them feel less uncertain. Our industrial policy is quite clear...(*Interruptions*) I am very sorry, Shri Banerjee, we cannot oblige you. Because there was talk of uncertainty, we decided to re-state our policy very clearly a short time ago. Governmental decisions are taken in the light of the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956, which clearly lays down the fields reserved for the public sector and fields which are reserved for the private sector and others in which both sectors could play their respective role. The priority given to them has been revised from time to time, according to the needs of the plan and our development. When the management of a mill or mine is mismanaged or is allowed to deteriorate without modernisation or re-investment, and it is taken over by the government in order to ensure continuity of production and employment and in order to modernise it, the bogey is raised that "government is going to nationalise everything" and "there is a climate of uncertainty". This uncertainty, if any, apart from being in the minds of the hon. Members opposite, is largely the making of some elements in the private sector.

So far as we are concerned, our socialism is not coterminous with nationalisation. I have said it many times. Where nationalisation is necessary for the better running of anything or for the public good, we shall not hesitate to do it. But we do not believe that there should be nationalisation merely for the sake of taking over concerns or factories.

One hon. Member* asked me for my definition of socialism. I have spoken on this subject quite a lot in various forums and I believe, my views have been made perfectly

* Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

clear. My socialism does not envisage government doing everything. We neither expect this nor do we desire this. What we want to create is a climate of equality of opportunity in which vast millions can help themselves.

I am not a marxist. But I must say that the word does not frighten me either. Some of the insights given by Marx have been acknowledged even by apologists of the capitalist system. Men like Marx or Gandhi or other great men are too big to be imprisoned by "isms", –of Marxism or Gandhism. Their ideas are too solid to be affected by this sort of cirticism.

There are many forces in the world which do not want India to succeed. They are disturbed at the mood of self-assertion and the splendid performance of our people in facing the challenge. India can only follow an independent foreign policy, and our successive actions have proved this. Since December 1971, a new theory is being evolved, that of being a dominant power. I have never regarded this as a compliment. In fact, when I first read the phrase, I told a newspaper correspondent, who was interviewing me, that in my view this was a crude attempt to sow suspicion against us amongst our neighbours. I have made the same remark during my visit to Nepal and on various other occasions. So this is not in reply to the speech reported in today's newspapers. We in the Government of India do not believe in power politics. We do not desire the status or the perquisites of what is known as conventional power. Events in Asia have proved that this kind of thinking by anybody that he is dominant or that a big power has some kind of divine right to a sphere of influence, just does not apply in the contemporary world.

We, of course, have never believed in this. Now it has been proved to the entire world. If India has any strength, its strength is first to be used for the solution of our own national problems and then for the support of the independence and individuality of other countries, specially, developing countries.

This is the philosophy which was the basis of our position in Simla. We are sorry that some countries still choose to indulge in anti-India tirades. Any indulgence in dramatics by certain elements will not encourage friendship or understanding.

I heard one hon. Member saying here that it was a matter of shame and sorrow that we kept on talking about friendship with certain countries when those countries did not wish to be friends. Now, it is not a question of who wished to be friends : it is a question of what we consider to be in our national interest. Other countries cannot be interested in our national interest. They will be interested in what they consider to be their national interest. But we have to pursue whatever steps, whatever policies, serve our interests, and which we think, are going to ultimately strengthen this nation. The Government of India is not ashamed to pursue friendship. Saying that we want friendship with a particular nation is not going to weaken us. We have always stood for friendship with all nations. This does not mean that we beg for friendship. Not at all. We state our point of view when we are asked for it. If we are asked, "Do you want to be friends ?", either we have to say yes or no. We cannot say anything in the middle. Therefore, we do believe in friendship with all nations. But we believe in friendship with honour, friendship with equality and friendship

which is to our mutual interest and benefit. It is that sort of friendship for which we are working.

There is some concern in the press and elsewhere about the prisoners of war. I heard that one hon. Member was also very unhappy over this matter. The question of prisoners of war is not insoluble. Neither Bangladesh nor India has put any obstacles in the way of its solution. But to expect India to free the prisoners of war without the concurrence of Bangladesh is wholly illogical and unrealistic. Also, how can we take seriously the plea of those who raise the humanitarian side of the question when they are so strangely and suspiciously silent over the fate of over 4 lakh Bengali civilians and military personnel who have been dismissed from their jobs and herded into camps ? All the so-called world opinion which is agitating today about the prisoners of war has no thought of these poor people. So far as we are concerned, we are not interested in keeping them. It is a burden to us and it does not help our policy in any way. But certain international realities have to be understood and faced. You cannot ignore the existence of Bangladesh or the interest which Bangladesh has in this question.

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I am only one head of Government, Mishraji.* We are not stopping any meeting; we are not interfering in this matter. Bangladesh is an independent sovereign nation and must be treated as such.

Now, a rather very important problem is that of law and order and of violence. It has been stated in this House that violence has grown and that the law and order situation has deteriorated because we have roused the expectations of the people. I hope the hon. members will consider this statement in some depth. What is the alternative ? Either you tell people about their right or you tell them that they should remain suppressed. There is no middle way. If you want to change society, then the changes must bring certain benefits to those who have not so far had them. The only other way is to keep the *status quo,* which means that those who have so far been neglected remain neglected.

One of the weaknesses of our country was the apathy of the so-called weaker sections...

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The performance is going ahead**. If some people do not want to see anything.

*** *** ***

No. It was spectacular until 1962. After that there were many many difficulties***. As I said earlier, there is no galloping, it is a slow forward movement. Nevertheless it is a forward movement. It is not a static situation..:(*Interruptions*) But what is strange are

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* Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark : "Why don't all the three heads meet ?"

** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark: "You want to change the *status quo* through promise or performance?"

*** Replying to Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu's remark : "Spectacular performance !"

the methods employed by the opposition. I do not know whether this is supposed to improve performance or to improve the law and order situation—these methods seem to be intended to create as much agitation and disturb as many things as possible. So far, I have not been able to see any constructive method nor, with all respect to the hon. members opposite, have I heard a word from the Opposition parties condemning such violence or the sabotage which has taken place... (*Interruptions*)

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The CRP is normally asked for by the State Government when they feel that the situation cannot be met by ordinary means.* There is no doubt that in many places the loss of property and life would have been far greater had it not been for the C.R.P.

I see that friends from Andhra and Telangana are present in force. I do not know what they are expecting me to say. Obviously, I cannot say very much. This problem has a long history. We did not create the problem. We are not writing on a clean slate. Whatever the situation today, it is the result of a number of things that happened over the years, involving many issues. The present trouble has not arisen out of anything which we have initiated.

I am deeply concerned about what has happened in Andhra Pradesh. I have heart-felt sympathy for those who have suffered, for the loss of lives and other hardship. I have respect for the emotions of the people and, especially, of my sisters of all parts of Andhra Pradesh. I can understand their agony. The manner in which the situation has developed, the manner in which, if I may say so–I hope my friends would not mind–when misunderstandings arose, there was hardly any effort to explain the correct situation, and the misunderstandings were allowed to grow. And developments took quite a different turn.

I have deliberately not spoken on this issue because I felt that it was not fair to pronounce judgements in such a highly emotional and surcharged atmosphere. We all know that whatever the motives, whatever the emotions–I am not passing judgement on them here–I am not saying whether they are right or wrong, but we know that the movement has resulted in a great deal of violence. It has resulted in acts of sabotage ? The people who have interfered with the railways and other installations, are not ordinary people. They are people who obviously knew just what to do, in order to disrupt communications, the railway line or whatever it was. We know also that there was a certain amount of coercion. Several people have written to me telling how they were forced to put their names on to a statement or to say something, etc. All these things have happend...

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They were not M.Ps. and they were not legislators**. They happen to be a very large number of people in Andhra Pradesh and even though Mr. Piloo Mody has been there, I probably know a larger number than he does.

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* Responding to Shri S.A. Shamim's remark : "CRP atrocities."

** Replying to Shri Piloo Mody's remark : "That must be your own MPs."

The students and the NGOs who have taken a prominent part in the struggle have been the ones to have suffered most. The students in their studies and the time they have lost, and the NGOs and their families in many other ways. And, of course, the ordinary, common people have also suffered great hardships. I am deeply sorry for all this, but we are told that one of the reasons for this agitation is economic backwardness and economic disparity or that some people have been made to feel second-class citizens. All kinds of things have been said and there may be some justification for them. But, backwardness can only be fought by pooling our resources in unison, not in isolation. And, the destruction of public property cannot but make the country poorer. Most of the property destroyed, – apart from a couple of house – and so on – are utility services used by the ordinary, average citizen.

Not only has there been suffering during the struggle, but hardship due to interruption of communications and other things is going to continue for a long time; since it is not possible to repair them. I don't know whether it is fair to ask that other projects be given up in order to give priority to this work.

All I want to say is that decisions cannot be taken on the streets, or under any type of pressure. There must be calm and rational thinking. There must be discussion on all aspects of the problem. We know that no solution, however good a solution it is, can ever be the last solution or the perfect solution. Any solution to this problem or to other problems raises a number of new questions and problems. I should like to know what the answers to these problems are. Some problems we already know. Others will arise. What will be the answer to them ? I have met and am meeting a large number of people, M.Ps. and others who are coming. I have met those who stand for integration for one State, I have met those who are today speaking of separation, and I have also met those who are trying to bridge the gap between the two. I have told them, as I have stated publicly, that all aspects and all opinions will be given due consideration. (*Interruptions*) As I said, all opinions that are expressed, all aspects of the problem which have been brought before me, will be given due consideration, but the decision must be taken in a calm and unexcited atmosphere.

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These decisions cannot be made that way*. May be, the Telengana people, having had their agitation, have remained peaceful afterwards. But now the other people are having an agitation. One cannot say that there is peace.

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It has certainly to be left to the Government, not to me alone, but to the Government.** In a democratic system, the decisions are taken by Government and not just by the Opposition or by people collecting on the roads.

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* Replying to Shri S.B. Giri's remarks : "We are waiting for your announcement. We are peacefully agitating for it. There was no violence in Telengana. It is better to announce it immediately. There is agony among the people."

** Replying to Shri Piloo Mody's remarks : "I would like to know, is there no democratic process by which this decision can be taken? Does it have to be left to you and to you alone ?"

Only when people are calm and they can talk about it rationally and in an unexcited manner can the discussions go on properly; and anyhow, at this moment we are in the midst of the discussions.*

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My request and appeal to students would be to resume their studies and to all Government servants, especially the NGOs who have suffered so greatly and are undergoing hardships to resume their duties. (*Interruptions*).

As you have seen in the newspapers, whenever and wherever peace is restored and there is no longer danger in a particular area, the CRP and the Army units are being withdrawn.

Therefore, let us all think calmly on these questions and on all the likely repercussions of whatever decision is taken.

Some hon. Members felt that we had not said enough about education or about students.

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Obviously, this is a question with which we are all deeply concerned, and Government is trying to deal with it.** It is not an easy problem because it is touched by all that happens in the country.

The other day, somebody came to see me, I cannot remember who; he said that a person was scolding some students and others for making a noise and the manner in which they were behaving. One student turned and said 'Sir, are we worse than Parliament ?', and no answer could be given.

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This was a thought which arose in a person's mind. (*Interruptions*). I am not feeling proud at all***. Nobody will and nobody could possibly feel proud. But this is the view of someone who has nothing to do with our party or politics. This was a spontaneous remark by a young person...

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No matter what the purpose is ...(*Interruptions*). I am not exempting anybody. But anybody who sits in the visitors' galleries or sees the record will know who makes more noise (*Interruptions*). The Opposition is welcome to attack the Government; and if they think that making baseless personal allegations is going to strengthen them, let them make

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* Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark : "How long is the gestation period going to be ?"

** Replying to Shri G. Viswanathan's remark : "So, Andhra is over?"

*** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remarks, "It is a very unkind remark, so far as Parliament is concerned. If the Prime Minister is speaking this with approbation, then it is the unkindest out of all, and the Prime Minister should not feel proud of it..."

them. I do not wish to comment on what happens in the House, because you, Sir, are witness to it all the time...(*Interruptions*). On the rare occasion when one of our Member tries to rise to say something, then the entire Opposition gets up to shout him down. If this is the opposition's version of democracy – well, it is not my version – nor do I think that this can work.

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We are not in Parliament to play political games; we are here to build the nation. I think the majority of our people have accepted the path which we have outlined. It is true that we have made mistakes, but we try to correct them. We have shortfalls in our programmes. But as I said earlier, we are nevertheless going ahead. In spite of the most tremendous difficulties which any people have ever faced in the long history of the world or especially this continent.

Parliament should reflect the people's will and by the quality of discussion. I think they should educate our people...

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One hon. Member has spoken of scapegoats. I seek no scapegoat. I have never been one to shirk my responsibility. It is the Opposition which is seeking scapegoats for its inability to formulate any policy which they can put before the country or for them to find popular support.

One hon. Member spoke about a sort of what he called the motley crowd in our party. We do have people of different opinions in our party. We have a range of opinions, but that entire range is contained within the main policy which we want to pursue and to which we are committed. But look at the hon. Members opposite. What is there in common between the policies of the Swatantra and the CPI (M), for instance ?

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But they are always together. They function together. After consulting outside, they come in and have a united forum here.

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In all seriousness, I should like to say that what the Opposition is doing in India is weakening the will of our people (*Interruptions.*) It is belittling the achievements of our people (*Interruptions*). Why are they so touchy, Sir ? They abuse us in the worst possible language and we are supposed to listen to them and we do, but they are not prepared to listen to even a small remark.

The world situation is changing. The situation in Asia is also a fluid one. If I may repeat what I said in my party meeting, this is a time when long-established patterns in many parts of the world are changing, are shifting. It is a time when the entire Indian nation must be extremely vigilant and on its toes, so as to be aware of any nuances that take place (*Interruptions*).–including the Opposition–that is what I am just trying to say.

In these situations which are forming and unforming, we must be on the look-out for the dangers that can arise for India. We must all keep before us a picture of a country which is socially better, economically stronger and intellectually and morally free.

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Therefore, Sir, I appeal to my party, to the Opposition parties, to rise to the great challenge of the moment, to justify the faith which the people have reposed in Parliament. We are, as I said, at the juncture where faith and hard work can and will see us over this difficult hump. Let us not fail the nation.

So, Sir, I request all hon. Members not to press their amendments and to support the motion on the President's Address.

Challenges Before the Nation*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, once again we have had a long debate on some of the major issues which are confronting the nation. Hon. Members have given many useful suggestions and there have also been many criticisms. We do not resent many criticism. In fact, no individual or Government who is anxious of achievement can resent criticism because that is one of the ways of finding out our shortcomings or mistakes and we have never said that we are immune from making mistakes. Anybody facing the vast challenge of lifting a country almost from one age to another must chart many new courses and in that process one cannot get much help here or from outside. Therefore, at this time there has to be a certain amount of experimentation and some risk taken. So some are unavoidable mistakes. But in spite of these shortfalls and mistakes, our country has been steadily going forward. There have been many obstacles which we could not have foreseen. There has been aggression. And yet, sometimes slowly, sometimes a little fast, we have been making some steady progress in every direction. We welcome any suggestion or criticism made by hon. Members of the Opposition or from our own side. But when a government or a party is accused of totalitarianism or of murdering democracy in West Bengal, I believe this was the phrase used by one hon. Member**–it is hard to take it seriously. The party which made this accusation is not a party given to a sense of humour, if I may say so with all respect. Hence, for it to make such an allegation merely points to its own mental make-up and perhaps to some deep-laid plan. I do not want to go into the question of what is democracy and what is not democracy. I do think that senior Members of the House should at some time, go into this matter in depth what democracy is practised in other known democratic countries; what is the role of the Opposition in those countries and what are the responsibilities which the different parties undertake, and so on.

How much time does the Government or do the Ministers give to the ordinary people ? There are many such questions which will arise if you study this question, rather than the present fashion of talking loosely about democracy.

Some time one person uses a phrase, and others take it up and nobody stops to think whether there is any truth in it or what the actual situation is. The hon. Member** who made this remark in this House was referring specially to West Bengal. The story of West Bengal is not unknown to the hon. Members of the House or to the public of India or, I would go even further to say of the rest of the world. While those developments were

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *R.S. Deb.*, 28 February, 1973, cc. 211-32.

** Shri Niren Ghosh.

taking place it was a matter of sorrow for all of us and specially for the ordinary people of Bengal. When his party was in power, their actions are not the subject of guess work; but of documented history. The number of actual man-days lost because of civil strife, the number of political clashes, the political deaths, developments in factories all these are not matters of conjecture; they are matters about which information can be got in many places. What has happened to Bengal since then is also known to hon. Members. I would say it is one of the greatest stories of political renewal in the history of democracy. It is how the people themselves asserted their views, their resentment over the violence there. It is only recently that some thousands of our own party workers went to Calcutta–in December–and they saw for themselves the change in the atmosphere which has taken place. Not only they but also people from all sections and from all parts of the country, who know Bengal and who have travelled there, have been deeply impressed and full of admiration for the many improvements which have taken place, specially in the economic field. There has been an increase in the public sector production. If I may mention a specific instance, I would mention Durgapur. And with greater co-operation between management and labour–as the President has urged in his Address–I am sure that production will increase still further. Anyhow, the people of Bengal saw to it that the machinations of violence would not succeed.

One hon'ble Member has also stated that the policies of the Congress Government would break up the country. Which party could wish for the country's breakup ? Would it be a party which during all its existence has firmly stood and has consistently struggled for the freedom and unity of the country–freedom, when we were under a colonial power, and now, freedom of judgment, of assessment and of action ? Or would it be those who refer to Indians speaking different languages as having different nationalities ? I hope that hon. Members noted the strange meaning given to this word by the hon'ble Member.

One of the most urgent problems to which most members made reference and for which we in the Government as individuals and as Ministers have the deepest concern, is the hardship that is being caused because of the drought in parts of our country.

An hon. Member purported to quote me as having said that there was no food shortage. I must tell him that I have never said this. Obviously I could not have made such a remark. All that I have said is that the shortage has been greatly exaggerated. The shortage is in pockets in the country and where it exists, the situation is serious. It is not a matter which one can ignore and the shortage is not one merely of foodgrains, it is also of fodder and of drinking water. These two are causing as much hardship as the shortage of foodgrains. But there is no doubt that the psychology which was built up did result in a mentality where greater shortage was caused, that is when a number of people–I am not speaking of the big hoarders though there may be big hoarders. When the ordinary householders feel that there is danger of difficulty in getting goods and therefore decide to keep just a little more than their actual requirements. In a country where the population is huge, this could make an enormous difference to the overall stock. This is : what I have said. Difficulties are there but they are not such as cannot be faced with courage. The question is : are we going to exploit these difficulties for political gains or are we going to say that this is a

national problem, this is a situation where people are suffering and so we must get together to see how we can mitigate their hardship in every possible way ? Naturally, the heaviest responsibility lies on the Government to organise effective relief. No matter what we do, obviously we cannot create conditions of a normal rainfall. We can only help people to tide over an extremely difficult situation. However the scale of relief this year has been a very vast one, bigger than ever envisaged before. Ninety thousand relief-works of all kinds are going on in the affected areas and Rs. 445 crores have been allotted for this work and for the other needs of these areas. The House knows that we have prepared a special food plan for 1973-74 which will increase the rabi-production and which gives inputs for higher kharif output. We have news from the States that these steps have had an impact already.

There are special programmes for improving the conditions of water supply for trying to lessen the hardships with regard to cattle, *i.e.*, fodder, and so on and very special attention is being given to the generation and availability of power.

The Minister of Irrigation has made several statements on this matter. The power shortage is partly because we did not envisage how much our needs and our demands would grow, and how quickly but also because when much of our power is dependent on water and when there was such a shortfall of rain and snow in the last two years, this was bound to affect the power supply as well. Anyhow, we are looking into this matter with great urgency and I hope the situation will improve. It is affecting the national economy.

We have a long-term strategy for the areas and sections of people which are dependent on rainfall. The dry areas programme gives special attention to jowar and bajra production. Normally there is attempt to have the same type of pattern regardless of type of land in the country but we now have to look into the matter from an entirely fresh point of view and see how it can be dealt with, what new crops on industries can be developed, what new pattern can be evolved so that people do not have so much hardship merely because of the weather.

I would like to assure the hon. Members that we have equal concern for every State of India. When the question of drought is considered, equal consideration is given to every State or that part of the State which is suffering from drought. I am sorry and it is a matter of distress that some States have the feeling that a particular State is getting more than another and this unfortunately becomes a matter for competition.

As I said earlier this is an issue on which we must all, regardless of our other differences, have only one purpose, how we can unitedly help those who are suffering. I would appeal to the Opposition Members, to our party and even those who do not belong to any party, not to consider this matter as a political or a partisan one. There is tremendous scope for co-operation in meeting this greatest challenge of the moment. When we had the severe drought in 1966-67, which affected Bihar and Eastern U.P., this very crisis provided the added impetus to achieve national self-sufficiency. So we should utilise this crisis, this drought, to spur our effort to achieve a breakthrough in dealing with the dry belt in India. That is the belt which has been mostly affected this time.

Some hon. Members have expressed doubts about the efficiency of the working of our take-over of the wholesale trade. I do not want to go into details here but every step is being taken to see that the work is done efficiently, and that the best possible people are used for it. Naturally when one attempts something new there can be difficulties and especially in a measure like this there is tremendous organised resistance from political parties and from others interested that it should not succeed. So, that may have a little effect. But avoiding the measure for this reason will not help. Past experience of the actions of some of these people has not been a good one and that has also left considerable room for improvement in efficiency, honesty and so on. It is for all our Parliament Members and others to point out where the difficulties might arise, where inefficiency comes in and to see how this can be avoided or mitigated or removed.

The question of employment is a major one. I do not want to go into the whole question here but it is sometimes felt that the special programmes which we took in hand have not worked. Now this is not true; when a programme is initiated it does take time for it to get off the ground and to show results. We announced the programme quite some time ago. I was also concerned about its progress. I have personally taken up this matter with Chief Ministers and other people concerned. The programmes are having effect now and people are being employed. We never said, nor did we think, that these particular schemes would solve the entire unemployment problem. Only further development can solve that and we are trying to see that the Plans and projects help in the absorption of our talented manpower. In the meantime the schemes that had been thought of are beginning to work and are helping a number of unemployed.

Now, Sir, it was also stated in this House that for the last 10 years heavy industries at Ranchi and the steel factories have not produced even 50 per cent of their capacity and this was used as an excuse to speak against the expansion of our steel plants. I do not think any useful purpose is served in going into the past. Our projects have had a number of problems, teething troubles, technical problems, the management trying to learn an entirely new job, labour troubles, political troubles and so on.

What is important is not what has happened but what we are doing now to solve these problems. Government has done a great deal during the last one or two years and I am glad to say that production has steadily improved. The capacity utilisation in the steel sector is 67 per cent as against 59 per cent earlier and this will go up to 77 per cent this year, 1973. In fact an improvement is discernible in most public enterprises. Government will push ahead with this improvement. I hope that this does not frighten any of our Members because the public sector which they flogged and jeered at and which gave them talking points for so many years, is no longer going to oblige them. It is now making good.

The other question, which is of interest to hon. Members, is the formation of a holding company for steel. One hon. Member described it as unrealistic and undemocratic. Some thought that it might lessen Parliament's control. Nothing can be farther from the facts. If hon. Members had taken the trouble to look into the details of the constitution, powers and functions of the Steel Authority, they would see that the whole structure is designed to ensure genuine accountability to Parliament. Parliament will continue to exercise control

over the Steel Authority Limited, as it does in the case of other public enterprises in the form of voting on Government investments, considering the report of the Auditor-General etc. For long we have considered accountability as something synonymous with a mere observance of the rules. We want to change this and have a more realistic approach.

In Parliament and outside, we constantly hear about the need for reform, whether it is administrative reform, or educational reform. It is felt that the structure should be changed. And yet when any reform is undertaken there is a great deal of timidity about it. People are immediately worried about the risks involved and how it will work. Nothing in this world is without risk. Even crossing a road entails risk. If one wants to go ahead, one just has to take those risks. Government is determined to go ahead with administrative forms on a wide front. A holding company in one sector is only the beginning. Similar arrangements may have to be made in a few other sectors also. It may not be the only answer in every case. We do not say it is. We may have to look for other answers but we must be prepared for broad experiments and to take risks if we are to get out of the rut in the field of administration.

There are other questions which have been with us for a long time. There is the question of minorities, the treatment of minorities, atrocities against Harijans.These questions are part of our national life, part of national history and part of our present endeavour–the endeavour of all parties and the country. Basically what do we want to do ? My own approach is known to the House. In my view there are two apsects of the problem. There is the human aspect, individuals suffering because of difficulties either of religion or of not having sufficient places in the Services. That is one part, but the second part is that in a nation which faces a tremendous challenge, we simply cannot afford to have any community neglected or backward. For whatever reason it may be and however small their number may be they are part of the national human resources. They are part of the national wealth and, therefore, it is our duty to see that whatever grievances they have should be removed and they should be strengthened in order to bear their own responsibilities and the burden of taking our country forward and solving its many problems. Unfortunately these matters are sought to be exploited politically or for some other reason, and this makes it difficult to go ahead. Sometimes the minorities themselves are taken in by slogans and their attention is diverted from what could really make them stronger and enable them to face the difficulties and problems into various sidelanes which give rise to agitation and involvement in acrimonious debate and argument. While they are so involved the programme which should be undertaken is neglected and it seems to lose its priority as if it were of minor concern. Special measures are being taken to remove these grievances. With regard to the services, perhaps, hon. Members are aware of what is being done in West Bengal. We are trying to follow this in other States. But a special effort should be made that at all levels of appointments people from the minorities should not only be considered but should be helped to get employment. Similarly, wherever there is any difficulties, we must all see that it does not become a matter which divides us but one in which we all get together to see how we can help. While such a language grievance remains, there cannot be full unity. We have seen the situation in different parts of the country. I am referring to all languages, not only Urdu because there has been trouble in other parts

of the country over other languages also. We have always regarded Urdu as one of the Indian languages ; it is definitely an Indian language, it is not a foreign language by any reckoning. It is a language which has provided rich literature and beautiful poetry, and it would be like throwing away our wealth if we do not develop Urdu or if we try to give it an inferior position. We are seeing how Urdu can be helped. Certain steps have been taken in Bihar and in U.P. regarding the teaching of Urdu and for the appointment of teachers for Urdu. Other steps are being considered.

Similarly, with regard to what are known as the backward classes or the Harijans, it is a matter of shame for the country that we have had caste system which has discriminated against our own people, our own brothers and sisters. The Congress and the great leaders of the Congress gave this question the utmost importance and high priority. They endeavoured to change this attitude of mind. Important Congressmen sacrificed their lives in order to prevent such discrimination between one religion and another or between one caste and another. But the disease is still with us. Some of the so-called atrocities have also been taking place for many years. But today, because of greater awareness they come to light. Previously we did not always get news of such happenings. It is good that now they come to light. This gives the opportunity of dealing with this question in a much more systematic and firm manner. But unless we have the support of all the MPs, all the MLAs, all the local leadership and the people, it will not be possible to do much. There cannot be protection to every village or to every group of houses. It is only if there is an alertness amongst the neighbours, if we can inculcate the right attitude of mind and approach towards the weaker sections, that this matter can be dealt with. In the meantime, we are taking steps, we are not just shelving the issue. I have recently spoken to the Chief Ministers that they should take a personal interest and that they should institute a cell or unit, whatever they would like to call it. This cell should be vigilant and should act immediately when any incident takes place, whether of a communal nature or concerning Harijans or *Adivasis*. I found that all Chief Ministers were equally concerned about this matter, and I am sure that they will follow up this idea.

One of the grievances ventilated outside has been with regard to the Aligarh University. Now we in the Government have always been anxious that this great seat of learning, which is an institution of national importance should maintain its distinct character. We stand for greater academic freedom in this university as well as in all other universities. Representatives of the academic community have met the Education Minister recently, and have made certain suggestions. Ideas for improving the institution are always welcome from this as well as from any other university. But some of the problems are part of the much bigger problems of educational reform. People ask for educational reform, for changing of the structure of education and so on, but whenever anything is sought to be done, there is hesitancy and we seem to branch off into other arguments in which education is forgotten, and all kinds of things are trotted out. Elements of communalism are also injected as if these were something specifically against one particular community. I would very strongly like to reaffirm that this is not true. Whether we are Hindus or Muslims or Sikhs or Christians or of any other religion, we must consider the future of this country and what relation education has to that future. I am glad that some of our senior members

raised the question of education. It is one of the more serious questions before the country. Other matters, such as, drought or unemployment or the difficulties of production and industry are all passing phases. Many such problems have come and we have solved them. Now they are past and other problems have arisen. But education is something which is going to be with us for as long as the country itself exists and it will always be in need of reforms. At this juncture this matter is more urgent because it has not changed for a very longtime. But no matter how many changes and reforms we bring about, reform must be a continuous process. As society changes, as the demands of the people or the needs of humanity change, education must keep pace with it if it has any relevance and meaning to our development. Education begins as Ganga Babu has rightly said, from the moment the child is born. We are paying special attention to pre-school child. We are trying to see how all these programmes can be co-ordinated–nutrition, health, attitude towards the nation and one's surroundings, the neighbourhood and so on. The other day I had a visit from the President of the International Assoication for the Blind. I was struck by what he said that if a little attention is given to the baby, that is, if the baby is fed something green, a large number of cases of blindness, some lakhs of cases, would not occur. This is such a small matter. Any school, health centre or community development centre can take up this work. It does not have to be a special programme. I personally think that prevention of illness, knowledge of nutrition, eye care and ecology, these are all part of education. We should coordinate all these matters.

Any reform that we shall think of is going to disturb some vested interest or another of some religion, of some language or of some strata in society; we have to be prepared for this resistance. If we are serious about wanting reforms, wanting to change the structure, then we have a positive responsibility in seeing that these reforms go through and that when there is agitation, let us not subside or decide to take the line of least resistance saying "Well there are some people who are in trouble; let us support their cause". Every minor cause has to be set aside before the larger cause of this nation's progress. It is in that light that you must judge what cause is to be supported any where. We have to face issues boldly and state what is necessary for the country and therefore for the people themselves. Sometimes people may think they have a genuine grievance. But the things they ask for are the very things that will keep them backward. We see this not only in regard to such matter as reform but even in regard to the development of certain areas. People sometimes take a position which will not help them to grow. It may help them marginally, but it will not enable them to break out of the rut. This is a question for all responsible people, in politics or outside to consider.

We must change our educational structure. Certainly it must help our young people to get better employment. But I do not think it should be merely employment-oriented. That would be a very narrow way to look at development of personality or to see the future of our country. Employment itself is not static. Today there are certain needs, and certain jobs are available. It may be that five years hence you need other jobs. Then, if a person has a very specialised training for a particular job, will he be able to face the challenge of such a change ? So, both these have to be considered : the total personality of the individual and also how he can deal with a particular job and whether he is suited for the jobs which

are available. Along with that if he can be given–I do not know whether this is possible–the kind of training which will make him a self-reliant, resourceful and adaptable individual, then it does not matter what he has learnt or has not learnt, he will be able to face crisis or challenge that might arise. This is what our educational system and our colleges and schools should aim at.

Most educational experts in the world are today in favour of curtailing university education. But we know that in this country this poses a special problem for us. Those people who have not had the opportunity of university education for all these centuries naturally feel that such a curtailment will affect them and that education will continue to have a kind of class bias. Surely we do not want that. We have to find a balance in which there can be some changes without shutting off opportunity from persons or families who, for the first time, are in a position to avail themselves of it. So, any problem which even eminent educationists of another country think of has to be looked at in the circumstances which obtain in our country. We have no guidelines in this we have no examples which we can follow. We have to know our own path step by step. It can only be done if we think more deeply about all these matters and if we are willing to make experiments. In most of the so-called advanced countries there are hundreds of new schemes being chalked out all the time. Some work, some do not work. But even the failures give experience which helps to plan out the future policy of Government or educational authorities. If we are afraid of failure, if we are afraid of mistakes, then we just cannot get out of the rut.

Much is said about standards of public life. I am one of those who have always laid very great stress on them. If we want to make India a special place, a better place, then standards have obviously to be raised all along the line. Public life or private life, the question is what sort of a country we want. It is very difficult to separate private life from public life. If a person is doing something in private life, you cannot expect him to be better in public life or *vice versa.*

Therefore the two are very closely bound together and there is no doubt that steps should be taken to improve the level of national life. But here again we try somehow to over-simplify the matter. If one merely moves from one house to another, is it going to help raise the standards ? It may perhaps give an impression to the public that one is living more simply. I know people who live very simply, but they may have large bank accounts. I am not judging whether this is good or not. What I am saying is this : let us not concentrate on a single point. Standards are a much wider matter. There must be simplicity in our country. I personally believe in simplicity not only as a duty but even from the point of view of elegance. What is simple is far more effective and much of the modern world is coming round to that thinking. I do believe in simplicity. But some of the phrases which we use are not conducive to real simplicity. The Government has a far greater responsibility for setting an example. But other people have also a responsibility. So has the Opposition. Standards are not merely in how you live, but in how you speak, in how you act and in what you do outside. Some opposition parties have deliberately taken a decision that all my meetings would be disturbed. Now, is this part of democratic functioning ? Is this laying high standards in public life ? I do not see anybody criticising such attitude. Look at the language that is used in these agitations. Have hon. Members tried to find out what is being

said ? I have not heard a single person criticising the kind of vulgarity that is sometimes heard and witnessed. When we talk of standards, let us keep in mind the bigger field in which everybody is concerned. And I hope those people who are bothered about standards will look into all aspects.

One of our other problems is an old one not so old as some of the other matters I have mentioned, but which is a long-standing one in independent India. And that is what is happening in Andhra Pradesh. There is an agitation there. There may be genuine grievances. First there was grievance on one side. There was violence. Not very good language was used. But somehow it calmed down and we were thinking of what steps to take so that their genuine grievances could be removed. Some steps were taken and we were going ahead. Then something happened and the whole question which seemed to be settled and moving towards solution was suddenly reactivated. And what was the result ? Now we have another agitation, again with violence–violence in deed and violence in words, combined with well-organised sabotage. Public property worth crores has been destroyed. Does that help the people? Even if you take the limited problem of Andhra Pradesh who is it who has suffered by the agitation ? It is the poor people, it is the average man who has suffered. The lines of the trains that he uses have been disturbed. The post office which he uses is unable to function. Rich people can get to Hyderabad and come to Delhi by plane. It is the ordinary people who have suffered. It is the students–although they are in the thick of the trouble–who have suffered. They have lost time. Anything can be got back, but when you lose one or two years, they are not going to come back. They have lost them for all time. And even Government servants have suffered great hardships during this agitation. Now there is a new ruling which puts the whole question of the *Mulki* Rules into a kind of melting pot. And I am told that another ruling is expected. So the situation is a changing one. I do not know what this ruling will be or what the effect of the other ruling on Mulkis will be ? We are going into all these matters.

The point is this : It is said that this agitation has arisen because of economic disparities, because some people thought that they did not get their due share and afterwards the others were made to feel that they were in their own words, "Second-class citizens". In our country, while the Constitution guarantees equality, there are many who, because of social and economic conditions, do not have the same rights of citizenship in practice as they have in the Constitution or in theory. This is true of the people in the hill areas ; it is true of the *Adivasis ;* it is true of many Harijans ; and it is true of people in very backward regions in every State. But can we start an agitation just for this reason ? We have to see all aspects of the question. No Government can function if decisions are to be taken on the streets, if decisions are to be taken merely because people get emotionally surcharged. Whatever the decision, it has to be taken in a calm and cool manner, after rational discussion and after considering all the problems that are going to arise. As I said in this very House during the last Session, suppose there is a separate Andhra State. Is that the end of the problem or does it open the door to many new problems before the State can get going ? So, all these questions have to be discussed. I think that our own people are coming round to this view which I welcome. In a matter of this kind, which will affect the lives of millions of people, apart from not giving way to pressures, it is important to ensure that we do not coerce anybody. A large number of people feel that such conditions have been created there

that they are forced to put their names on to some document or forced to say something which, in their own heart of hearts they do not favour.

At present I am meeting different kinds of people–those who stand firmly for integration, those who have begun speaking of separation and many other types of people in between these two. I have always been willing to talk to anybody who wants to come and express his views and I can only say that while nothing is conceded, nothing is ruled out on this point.

Some political parties have thought of taking advantage of the situation, because they had no political foot-hold in Andhra. They think that an agitation of this kind, which seems to be very popular, will increase their strength. They have not confined themselves to the division of Andhra Pradesh; they have demanded a new States Reorganisation Commission. Now, Sir, whether it is a good thing to have more States or fewer States, that is not the pertinent point at this particular juncture. What is pertinent is this : Do we recognise that this is a difficult period for the country ? There are the difficulties which are inherent in development and growth which we are facing and there were difficulties that were created by others and the burdens, financial and otherwise, arising from the crisis in Bangladesh and Pakistan. Added to them is the hardship caused by the drought. This is no ordinary drought. It has spanned almost the whole world, at least our part of the world and it has activated many international organisations to try and arrange for world-wide action on it. Is this the time to raise questions or agitations which cannot but weaken the country ? Any agitation, however well motivated, is a weakening thing. In normal times it may not matter. But in times like this, where the international situation is fluid, where those who did not like the way India emerged during the last critical years, are working against us, it does matter. Very powerful forces are working against us, some openly and some not so openly, and in every possible way they will try to weaken the country. The situation can be assessed only if as a nation we are vigilant and if our attention is focussed on these matters to enable us to recognize any change and thus be prepared with our reaction. Is this the moment to re-open administrative and other problems which are going to shake the very foundations of this country ?

I remember when the States Reorganization Commission was travelling around, I happened to be touring the whole country on my own, and everywhere I went, intellectuals, students, business people and others asked : 'Why the Government embarked on this ? Is this the time for this ? Our attention should be on development'. We could only say, 'Perhaps it is better to do it now since this is a requirement. We were committed to linguistic States even before Independence. Hence it was better to do it once for all and get over with it, instead of postponing it for a time when development would be at a much more delicate and complicated stage'. Today development is at a delicate and extremely complex stage, made more complicated by changes outside the country. So, at this moment, for anybody to say that we should embark on a venture such as this is, if I may say so with all respect, highly irresponsible, and is not keeping the interests of the nation at heart or in mind.

We have been told, and we do believe, that people's participation is of the utmost importance. That is the meaning we have tried to give to our democracy. We do not regard

democracy as is done in some Western countries where they have merely two parties. Some people thought that since we have more than two parties here, ours is not really democratic functioning. The number of parties is not important. What is important is whether the entire people feel involved in the direction in which the country is moving and in the steps which have to be taken in order to achieve the type of future we want. So we must all be bridges. Ganga Babu may have meant it as a compliment. But you cannot have only one bridge. Every Member of Parliament has to be a bridge between Parliament and the people, between the Government and the people. And unless we can give this feeling to the people, unless the Opposition members also are conscious of their responsibility in this regard, we shall not have that functioning together which is essential at this stage of our development. I am not passing the responsibility on to the Opposition. Far from it, it is the Government's responsibility to evoke the right response in the public and to go ahead with its programmes. This is very important as in times of war. This also is a major battle ; it is not a battle with cannon or arms, it is a battle for national economic and social re-construction. The risk of failing is much greater than any failure in war-time. We do want to have a dialogue with the Opposition and we do want to have a working together. We cannot cooperate with them in every matter. If we differ and if we are at absolutely opposite sides of an economic matter, then nothing can be done on it. But there are many areas in which there can be cooperation. However I find that there is no desire for such a dialogue. It is for hon. Members to consider how they envisage the future and whether the tactics to which they are resorting can take us towards a bright future. Whether those tactics are going to mitigate the difficulties before the people or increase them is the question which only you yourselves can answer.

Sir, I am not going into the details of all the points. Many of our Members have replied to them already. I would request all hon. Members to think once more on these great problems and see whether we cannot present a united front which alone can bring a real, effective and visible victory to our country in every forum. I request hon. Members not to press their amendments and to support the Motion of Thanks to the President.

Reforms in the Food Policy*

Sir, all the Members who have spoken have made a reference to the prevailing discontent and dissatisfaction in almost all section of the country. I myself have referred to this in my public utterances. I am, as Member of both sides of the House fully aware of the difficulties and the hardships which our people have had to face. I have expressed my deep sympathy with the people on account of these difficulties. I have not shirked the responsibility or, as, some hon. Members have tried to hint have tried to blame the opposition parties for the situation. But I do think that we need to look at this matter in a more objective manner.

What exactly is the situation ? The last two years of these acute difficulties have followed months of a different type of crisis, the Bangladesh crisis, and what it involved for the entire nation in terms of money spent, in terms of political and social tension, followed by the war. It was a matter of pride that our brave *jawans* and officers fought so well and won us such a laudable victory. But, unfortunately, it was a time of spending, followed by another period when more had to be spent in order to replace what we had lost in that period. After that came this severe drought which affected not only two-thirds of our country but very large portions of Asia and Africa. This phase of acute difficulty coincided with a period when foreign aid was considerably reduced and all concessional food imports were totally stopped. In spite of all this, we have been able to manage our requirements with our own production, and what we did import was on commercial terms. The percentage of imports to the total public distributions during 1972-74 was very low compared to the earlier years. Our development outlays were stepped up and the maximum relief was provided. At the same time as I mentioned earlier, defence needs were fully met. This is what the President obviously had in mind when he referred to the fact that we have been able to maintain our basic endeavour in spite of the major crises year after year during the last three years.

Of course, the key problem to the economy is the food problem. Except in the drought years, the total issues of foodgrains through the public distribution system used to be between 3 and 8 million tons. In 1972 it was 10.6 million tons and in 1973 it was nearly 12 million tons. This was managed with our own stocks and a small quantity of imports. In my humble opinion, if I may borrow Shri D.P. Dhar's phrase, this was a major achievement....

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *R.S. Deb.*, 28 February, 1974, cc. 84-101.

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During the 1966 drought, 14 million tons were distributed and our imports amounted to 10 million tons. I am sure hon. Members will appreciate that a single good crop following years of drought is not enough to stabilise the situation. This is what has happened this year, and market arrivals have been very low. I am not saying that our procurement drive has been effective. It has been effective in many places; it has not been so effective in other places...

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On the whole, effective, Shri Niren Ghosh, if you will excuse me.* Some of the figures which appeared from time to time in the press were found not to be correct when cross-checked with the authorities. In some places we expected a larger crop but due either to lack of rain at the right time or too much rain, our expectations were not fulfilled. I am not saying that we have not been to blame at all. We have been to blame; sometimes the party, sometimes the administration. But it would not be correct to say that all over India the procurement drive failed. It did not. And even in those areas where it was less than expected, it has picked up lately. Well, all this indicates that although there was the acute shortage last year, this year grains do exist in the rural areas and with the people who live in the traditionally drought-affected areas. But there is no doubt that the foodgrain problem is affecting the people of the urban areas, particularly urban areas in the deficit State. As I said, we do not absolve ourselves of all the blame. But it would be equally unrealistic to put all the blame on the Congress or the Government. Hon. Members are aware that at any time of shortage, whether in this country or in any other country, especially when it concerns foodgrains and other essential commodities, such a situation is exploited by unscrupulous traders and speculators. When a climate of scaricity is created, every one becomes scared about non-availability, and the ordinary citizen, if he can afford, even though he may not be very rich, buys more than he needs. And this in turn increases the scarcity.

We are sometimes accused of shielding traders, speculators, blackmarketeers and the like. Will hon. Members take just a minute to consider which parties and which groups are supported by such people ? These people have never supported the Congress at any time. They may sometimes come to us and utter sweet words and will do so to whoever forms the Government. I know they did the same to the C.P.I. (M) when they formed the Government in West Bengal. But it does not mean ...

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I said, sweet words**. I did not say that they were supporting you.

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* Replying to Shri Niren Ghosh's remark, "On the whole, a failure".

** Replying to Shri Niren Ghosh who said, "Give a single instance where they supported us. I would like to be enlightened on this".

What I am trying to say is that these are the sections who are angry with the Government. They are normally annoyed and they have become more angry since they have discovered that we are trying with all our strength to give a new orientation to our society. I am not saying that we have succeeded. But certainly we are involved in a major effort. We have taken steps which can take the country in the direction of socialism. And with each such measure, the anger and resistance of these groups have increased. The most recent example was the reaction to our takeover of the wholesale trade in wheat. We know what reaction this has had on the traders' community and on some political parties. It is known what political parties these reactionary sections support. Wherever we have information, wherever something is found, we do try to take action against them. In almost all cases, we have taken action. But in a democratic system, a person is presumed to be innocent unless he is found guilty and the procedures and the laws in this regard, as hon. Members know, are time-consuming. And these groups have taken advantage of this system. But I am in full agreement with the House that these elements have to be firmly dealt with and we are determined to do so; there can be no two opinions on this.

Now Shri Goray is here. He and other Members also took up this theme. He also accused me of blaming the Opposition for the state of affairs. I should like to assure him that at no time have I made such a statement. What I have said is that some opposition parties are exploiting the difficulties of the people and this has been categorically confirmed by an important leader of the Opposition. We expect the Opposition to oppose. We expect them to take advantage of our weaknesses, of our faults and our mistakes. Yet when there is a major national problem which is affecting the entire population and more specially the poorer and the poorest sections at that time, for the Opposition to take a stand which will increase the difficulties not of the Government–that has very little importance in this matter–but of the people as a whole is, in my view, not proper. That is what I have said. And I did say that certain opposition parties–I do not know what Mr. Goray's Party was doing at that time and I was not referring to it–have exploited the situation not only to blame the Government but also to make the situation worse. Which means that by so doing they added to the difficulties and hardship of the people. I am not given to over-simplification...

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I accept that*. But the trouble is that perhaps there is a bit of guilt-consciousness in everybody. No matter what one says referring to a particular party or group, everybody imagines that it may reflect on him or his party. This is the difficulty. So, they all rush to reply. I did not mention Shri Goray's party in this connection at all. In some places I specifically mentioned the names of parties active in my State.

I am not given to over-simplification but the Opposition is saying that Government alone is responsible for all economic ills. I have admitted that there have been lapses on

* Replying to Shri N.G. Goray who said, "Madam, may I point out why we have blamed the Government ? We have blamed the Government simply because the Government has not been determined enough in pursuing policies which they have declared. That has been our criticism".

the part of the administration and even the President in his Address has stated this plainly. I agree with Shri Goray and other hon. Members that we could do better by way of procurement, that we could be more strict in preventing profiteering and black-marketing and that we could do more to punish corruption. We are trying. It is not that we are not trying. There are certain difficulties and there may be those amongst us who are fully convinced. None of these problems is new except for procurement which is especially relevant today. All the other problems we have been facing from the time we became independent.

When, in addition to all this, I point out that there are vast international forces at work which limit our freedom of action. Some hon. Members have treated it as something of a joke. It is too serious a matter to be brushed aside. That is why I have said that those who behave in this manner perhaps do not want us to consider these aspects. When we talk about the international financial or economic crisis some people attempt to prove that the situation here and elsewhere is entirely unconnected. Those who criticise our socialist policies, would like our people to think that the rest of the world is sailing smoothly. They may not say in so many words but surely, when they claim that our policies have failed the implication is that other policies tried in other parts of the world have succeeded. When we point to the crisis which is overtaking the countries of the west, the affluent countries, it is not to excuse our own shortcomings, it is to put the problem in perspective. Events abroad do influence our economy. If prices rise there, they affect our prices also. Prices in the Western countries have gone up far more than some hon. Members have quoted but I am not going into those details just now. It is true that when the prices go up in a rich country, its people are not so affected. This I have explained in public meetings. In England the unemployed gets doles. Wages and salaries are also raised. So, we are not saying that those people bear the same hardship. We have said that whenever there is a difficult situation, it is the poorer nations who suffer more and within the poorer nations, it is the poorer sections who suffer more.

The reason why I mention the international economic problem is because a rise in prices in other countries does bring about an increase here. It has affected the economic situation in India, whether we like it or not. This is why I put the problem in perspective.

According to our reports and according to the foreign press which one sees, we find that most countries of the world are in the grip of some crisis or the other and not all their troubles are due to oil. The knowledge and instruments at the disposal of Governments are not sufficient to deal with the new situations which are arising and which in fact are major turning points in the world's economic history. India cannot escape this situation and that makes it all the more difficult for us because this situation happens to coincide with a phase which otherwise also was extremely critical for us. There are many unusual elements in the situation which, perhaps, hon. Members may not be entirely aware of. For example, until last year most Indian prices were higher than world prices. Whether it was foodgrains or edible oils, fertiliser or steel, in just one year the price abroad of every one of these articles has gone up the highest increase being in the case of crude oil. Industrial nations are now having to rethink the entire basis of their economic system which has

rested on the assumption of the inexhaustible availability of cheap fuel and other raw materials. We also have to make adjustments and, apart from oil, we have to realise that we can no longer look outside for food purchases or for credits.

Some hon. Members spoke of production going down. This is not correct. Production has not gone down in all sectors. In fact, in 1972 and 1973, up to September-October, there was a fall in production because of the drought and the power cuts, but since then production has increased in a number of sectors. For instance, in the public enterprises, taken as a whole, we were incurring losses until 1972-73. The net loss in 1971-72 was Rs. 19 crores. As against this, the 101 public undertaking in operation in 1972-73 earned a net profit of Rs. 18 crores. The net improvement in the period of one year is thus of the order of Rs. 37 crores.

A number of public enterprises will substantially achieve the targets set for this year and we expect the overall performance to show considerable improvement over the last year. The net profit of public enterprises may reach a figure of over Rs. 40 crores this year. This may not be a spectacular figure but there is no doubt that considering the situation, considering the difficulties and the sort of backlog which we have to catch up with, this progress cannot be entirely ignored.

The outlook for industrial production in the first half of 1974 is quite good. The main handicaps which still remain are power shortage and the problems of transportation and industrial unrest. The priority given to increasing production through existing power stations and for the creation of new capacity is specifically referred to in the President's Address, and questions have also been replied to in the House. This year, there will be roughly 1.5 million kilowatts of additional capacity which will relieve our power shortage to some extent. Coal production has also picked up and, with coal production, power availability will further improve.

It is important to ensure that there should be no interruption in movement or interruption in production due to unnecessary lockouts or strikes as happened recently in some parts of the country : I refer specifically to two big strikes over long periods such as those in the jute industry and the textile industry. Of course, there have been many others.

I was somewhat astonished to hear what my friend, the hon. Shri Abu Abraham has said about our being still dependent on foreign collaboration. In the world today, no nation can be entirely self-sufficient. We have seen that even for the biggest, the richest or the most affluent, there has to be give and take. Sometimes we give and take merely because of keeping friendship, even though the import or the export may not be strictly necessary. But there are imports and exports which are essential and I think these will remain for all times and specially as we go towards the concept of having a more united world. But I would like to point out that the nature of foreign collaboration is changing. We are not now taking help in the way we used to do because of our own growing capabilities and know-how. We have made it clear that foreign collaboration will be allowed only on priority sectors where there are production shortages as also in sectors where there is need for the

import of new highly sophisticated know-how. Hon. Members know that a Foreign Exchange Regulation Act was passed last year and the guidelines issued under it for allowing foreign collaboration have been placed before Parliament. The guidelines clearly indicate the limits and conditions within which foreign collaboration and investment will be allowed.

With regard to our five year Plans, in 1966-67, out of a Plan outlay of Rs. 2200 crores, foreign assistance was Rs. 1100 crores; that is, 50 per cent came from foreign sources. In 1972-73, an outlay of Rs. 4000 crores contained foreign assistance to the tune of Rs. 666 crores. You see what a big reduction this is. That is about 16-2/3 per cent. From 50 per cent it came down to 16 per cent. In 1973-74, it is about the same. We hope that in the Fifth Five Year Plan it will come down even lower. This demonstrates that far from increasing, foreign dependence is being steadily diminished and self-reliance is being strengthened.

One of the major topics of conversation, and debate in the speeches of hon. Members, was the talk of corruption. There may be corruption in Government; I have never denied it. In fact I have repeatedly said that wherever any *prima facie* case is made out we have not hesitated to enquire fully into it and we have not hesitated to take action. Action has been taken not only against those who are in Administration or in Government but also against black-marketeers and others, wherever we have been able to get hold of them. Corruption has always been there. Not only in our country but it exists in the affluent countries just as much. The papers have recently been very full of some of these matters and many other items do not always reach the papers. We know that in India corruption existed in the Feudal times; we know that it existed in British times and it is unfortunate that it has continued after independence. There can be no two opinions that not only should all forms of corruption be condemned in the strongest possible terms but that every effort should be made to root it out. However, I feel that what is being done today is to focus attention merely on the Government and I do not think this is the way in which corruption can be rooted out. If we are sincere about it then we must deal with all sections where there is corruption. Directing the people's anger only against the Government means that we are enabling other people to get away with their nefarious activities. The focus is drawn away from the profiteers who are allowed not only to escape but perhaps to thrive. We know that corruption is a two-way business. If we can be strict enough with the Government it will certainly be less in other spheres, but without strong action and focus on the other sections it becomes more difficult to deal with it in the Government. Those who are the most corrupting influence, who have the money with which to corrupt are quite often forgotten or perhaps deliberately shielded from public gaze and public anger. This is a question which required deep thought and where everybody instead of blaming one another, can sit and seek a solution.

Comments have been made about election money. I myself have said that this needs to be look into. I may be mistaken, but I seem to remember that this has been discussed with opposition leaders at a meeting earlier on. The suggestion was made that Government should bear all the expenses. The only difficulty is that the country is so vast that this

would entail an enormous sum. Whether it can be done or not, certainly it should be discussed and I think a way should be found how election expenses especially but also other types of corruption can be dealt with.

However, corruption cannot justify violence. Violence is as much a danger to democracy and to the unity of the country as corruption can be said to be. History shows us, not only remote history but recent history, the history of our own times, that regimes of terror which had started off with very big promises of sweeping to clean the administration, of cleaning up the country, fell headlong into greater corruption than had existed before they took up the massive cleaning operation ! Or it may be they just forgot to do it once they were in that position.

The greatest safeguard of good government and clean politics is democracy itself and I personally think that there should be open, direct election based upon adult franchise in the full gaze of the public. We know that sometimes there are incidents in elections and reference was made by some hon. Members just before I began, perhaps as an excuse for their walking out. This is a matter which concerns the Election Commission. Whenever any complaint has been made I think the Election Commission had gone into it and have held enquiry....

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Well, it is for them to say whether a case is made out or not*. I think that violence will subvert people's faith in themselves and it is astounding to me that people who vow lifelong allegiance to peace and harmony should at the first opportunity become apologists of violence.

Mention was also made here of the Shiv Sena. I think my own opinion has been very clearly and firmly expressed whenever I have had the occasion to do so. We cannot support any party which is parochial, communal, or sectarian in its outlook. The Congress has firmly stood for the principle that all of India belongs to every single citizen regardless of his religion, his place of birth, his caste and the language he speaks. He should have the opportunity of living and working anywhere he chooses to do so. Of course, I have said and I do stand by this that where there is any big industry or project it should be seen that those local people who cannot travel around seeking employment elsewhere should be given full opportunity. Otherwise, tension will be created. Basically the problem is one of economic difficulty. Once we overcome this phase, I think that this type of jealousy and rivalry will also go. In the meantime, to fan such tension or to put these ideas in anybody's mind that only a particular community should be employed in a particular place is very harmful to our concept of Indian unity. We should not encourage it in any way. All those who are opposed to this should stand together in this matter and see that such thoughts and tendencies do not increase.

The hon. Member, Shri Niren Ghosh, said something about my Nagpur meeting. Mr. Niren Ghosh was not there, but I was. A number of other people, including MPs, were

* Replying to Shri Niren Ghosh who said, "No, No."

there. I can tell him that normally three lakh people do not come if they do not want to see or hear a person. They do not take the trouble to walk miles from villages to go to a meeting place. Now, what happened was that before I came to the meeting there was a black-flag demonstration by about twenty or twenty-five people, no more. Then there was a very peaceful meeting, but there was not enough room for all the people. Therefore, the police asked some of our local organisers whether they should allow new people who were coming into the passages which are left open for people to come in and go out. But when these people were allowed in, many came and sat quietly; but along with them came the people with black flags. They fanned out into all the front sections and more especially in the Press enclosure. From there they not only shouted but they threw the sticks of their black flags and some broken chappals which presumably they had collected for the occasion. Most of these came on the Press enclosure. Naturally, the Press people got very excited and jumped out of this enclosure and started running. Another habit of those who disturb meetings is trying to throw dust. When suddenly dust descends, everybody gets up to look behind to see what is happening. As soon as they get up the other people push in the front. So, there was disturbance in the front only in three sections. There was no disturbance in the women's section. But especially the Press area was disturbed. The rest of the meeting sat absolutely quiet and in fact, one could hear sounds of 'Jai'. 'We want to hear' and so on. I would have stayed on for a longer period except that the time given for the meeting was extremely short and I had to reach by a set time the university which was celebrating its Golden Jubilee. Otherwise, no matter what the noise, I would have spoken longer. If I am scheduled to speak for ten minutes, if there is a noise, I speak for twenty minutes.

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Somebody mentioned it because I was in the House*. If you have not mentioned it, then I withdraw that part of it. But somebody mentioned it.

As I said, had there not been this limitation of time and not wanting to be late for the university function, I could have stayed on longer.

This was not a big point. But I just mentioned it to show how things get distorted in the Press and then get taken up by some people and further exaggerated.

Now, many hon. Members were naturally concerned about what has been happening in Gujarat. I think hon. Members know my own deep sorrow and anxiety at the conditions which have been prevailing there for the last few months. The students and the teachers may have started a movement in all sincerity. But we see that other elements have taken advantage of it. Widespread violence has resulted in the loss of many lives. I have already expressed my deep sympathy–and I do so again–with the bereaved families and also with those who have been injured, and amongst these there are also the policemen. Now, the police may not always behave with restraint but we must remember that they are also sons

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* Replying to Shri Niren Ghosh who said, "I would say that I did not mention anything regarding this matter in the course of my speech on the Presidential Address debate. Last session, I did put a question about Madurai".

of Gujarat, and one should not try to depict a section or a profession as being anti-people or anti-national and so on. Much property has also been destroyed. The burning of food shops and milkbooths cannot help the students or the other people in improving the food supply. It is our information that the poorer sections have suffered the most as usually happens in such cases. Shops of small shopkeepers have been burnt, not only destroying whatever foodgrains were available but making it impossible for supplies to be replenished. Actually, all sections have suffered. Banks and other institutions which go into the service of the people have been destroyed. I have been told, apart from the reports that we get through the administration or through our party, by members of other parties and by others that some of this destruction of big buildings and especially of banks, has been done not haphazardly or in excitement but in a very expert and knowledgeable manner. I do not think that any of our students or teachers could have expertise in this direction. We are doing everything possible to improve the administration. The party leadership asked the Government headed by Shri Chimanbhai Patel to resign, and in doing so our party was guided by the interest of the State rather than by any narrow party consideration. Despite the persistent efforts to provoke the administration even under the President's Rule, all those arrested under MISA have been released. The police have been asked to exercise the utmost restraint in the discharge of their duty.

Arrangements have been made to improve the availability of food stocks and steps have been taken to enable essential supplies to reach all places and to bring down the prices. In fact, I learn that the prices of all the foodgrains in the open market have come down. But certain political elements determined to subvert democratic political processes have exploited the legitimate grievances of the people. I hope I will be excused if I say that in true fascist style they have combined the skilful use of propaganda and exaggeration by an organisation of storm troopers to wrest power.

The words "fascism" and "fascist" are used rather loosely. If policemen hit some body too hard it is called "fascism". But actually the word has a definite meaning. The question is how did the fascist movement grow in Italy and how did the Nazi movement grow in Germany. When we use these words it is in that context that they should be taken. It does not mean abuse of power. Fascists may abuse power but this does not give that word the same thing. Fascism means a situation where a small group of people want to enforce their views, their desires on the larger group through force, intimidation, through coercion. And this is what we are witnessing in Gujarat.

Hon'ble Members are aware that democracy rests on the reconcillation of liberty with order. No democratic government can allow subversion of order by force organised by a minority. Unruly elements that are exploiting a situation should be exposed and not allowed to have their way. The ordinary citizen should not be disturbed. He should not be disabled from continuing his means of livelihood.

Several allegations of corruption were made against the former government of Gujarat. At no time have we been unwilling to have specific charges of corruption examined. If specific charges are made and if there is a *prima facie* case an appropriate enquiry in such charges will certainly, and immediately, be undertaken. But I do hope sincerely that all

sections of people in Gujarat will co-operate in the task of restoring normalcy and peaceful conditions.

I personally feel that dissolution is not a question of principle or policy. But I think this can be discussed only when normalcy has been restored. At the present moment there is no question whatsoever of forming a Government, any kind of government. But may I put to the House whether it is practicable to expect that there should be dissolution or any action which can have far-reaching and long-term implication for the entire country in the present atmosphere of coercion and violence ? The police may have behaved improperly, we do not support such action. But we have news, we have instances of coercion today. You read of resignations in the press. What is happening ? People are being threatened that their houses will be burnt. And houses have been burnt. We read of an incident when an M.L.A's son was kidnapped. It came out in the newspapers. If an MLA or somebody comes to Delhi, his family and children are threatened. So when resignations are taken in this manner, how can anybody say that this is a normal way of making a demand or expressing the people's view. I should like to reiterate that once normalcy is restored, we are willing to meet all sections, listen to their views and give serious consideration to their views and their demands. I should like to repeat that. What is being gained by the present agitation ? Everyday more people are suffering. And while all sections are suffering, the burden in any such situation always falls more heavily on the weaker sections.

I come now to a brief mention of our foreign policy. We are always being asked by the Jan Sangh and this was repeated in the debate to prove that we are pro-Soviet as if we have some skeleton in the cupboard which we are hiding and which we do not disclose to the public. Some countries spread this canard and false propanganda for their own purpose, for the furtherance of their own policies. But it is a great pity for any Indian to repeat this or echo it parrot-like without considering whether it is in the Indian interest or not. I do not think I need apologise for the friendship between India and the Soviet Union. The House and all hon. Members are aware that it has benefited India's interests and we think it has helped world peace. This friendship is not and it will not be at the cost of our friendship with any other country. We have declared this repeatedly. This leadership of the Soviet Union has declared this. The Soviet Union realises and we believe other countries also realise, and in fact they have said so to us, that we cannot be pressurised by other countries or by parties or groups in India to give up policies which are obviously and admittedly in the interests of our country. The House knows that we are very anxious to improve our relations even with those countries which have not been very friendly with us. Various steps are being taken which are leading towards more friendly contacts and closest cooperation and we intend to pursue these. I do not think any useful purpose is served by continuously harping on this question. Our ability to stand by our convictions was amply demonstrated during the Bangladesh crisis. We have continued to work for reconciliation and normalcy on the sub-continent as well as in other parts of the world. Therefore, we have welcomed the recognition of Bangladesh. It was long overdue and belated, but it has now happened and we have welcomed it. There is going to be a meeting of the three countries very soon under the terms of the Delhi Agreement for further steps towards normalisation. Hon. Members are aware of our policy of friendship with all. But again

new and further steps are being taken for closer cooperation in the economic and cultural fields, with other countries, not only our next-door neighbours, as, Sri Lanka, for instance, but also those which are a little farther away like Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and the other Arab countries. Recently we have had visits from President Sadat and Sardar Naim. The Foreign Minister of the Arab Emirates is still in our country. It is admitted by the world that our foreign policy has stood the test of time.

My colleague, Shri Borooah, has very ably dealt with the theory of the CPI (M) about nationalities in our country. He has also put into focus the nature of democracy as the word is understood the world over. We have diversity in our country. We can see it in this House. We can see it in any State or region. We have our different languages, our different religions, and we have our local cultural groups. We have welcomed this distinct personality of regions because we know it does not weaken the country, it is not divisive but it adds something which enriches our society. Each region has a distinct personality, I hope each one of us here has a distinct personality. But I do not think that this makes each region a separate entity. It still remains part of the whole. It does not help India in any way to talk of this problem of nationalities in this particular way. We believe and we have always said that our diversity strengthens our unity. If we were to put everybody in the same mould, then, new and different types of tension would arise which would be far more difficult to deal with. It is natural that each State should want to go ahead. Of course, there is no question of blocking its progress. But can one State advance if the country as a whole does not ? Therefore, does it not become incumbent on the slightly better off States or areas to assist the weaker areas ? It is for us to help create an atmosphere in which this is possible.

So far as the Opposition parties are concerned, there are differences and there always will be differences even on basic matters. But at the same time there are national issues on which, in my view, democracy demands a national understanding and a national endeavour. Democracy enjoins certain responsibilities upon us. An important part of democracy is that the ruling party should not suppress the Opposition. People should be allowed to speak and write. Would any Member like to travel round the world and point out the country where there is greater liberty of speech than in India. I would be glad to know, because I have not been able to discover one. Similarly, democracy enjoins upon the Opposition to give maximum co-operation to the Government on matters which concern the welfare of the people as a whole. If there is a normal economic problem, certainly you can exploit the situation. But as I said earlier, when the manner in which you exploit the situation aggravates the hardships of the people, especially the poorer sections, then the question arises whether that is the right thing to do at that particular moment. Should a national economic crisis not be regarded as we regard war ? Here was an emergency which concerned everybody, it was not an emergency which concerned only the Government, everybody was affected. Therefore, everybody should come forward and say, "We are united in the face of the emergency." It is an emergency, an economic emergency on a big scale. It is specially an Indian problem and at the same time part of a global problem. Hon. Members may differ but it is my view that this was a matter on which all of us should sit together and try to find solutions. We do have meetings with Opposition leaders. But they

themselves are divided. Some accuse us of being too radical, others of being too conservative and unfortunately the entire discussion is confined to this argument rather than finding what positive steps we can all take together to help the people or to help alleviate their sufferings. Democracy can be sustained only if we are vigilant. There have been nations where democracy was subverted by men of little vision or of overwhelming ambition and such men have been exploited, sometimes unwillingly by powerful internal and external forces. This is why I have been putting this problem before our people because our people must be alive to the peril which is ever present. We should not think that once we have gained our Independence, it is secure for all time. We have to be on our guard all the time. There is a special responsibility on Government and on Parliament. But ultimately it rests on the entire people of India.

My entire endeavour and the effort of our Party has been to strengthen the people to withstand external pressures as well as the insidious pulls of monopolists or those groups which we think will weaken the country from within. In this, I include all communal groups or groups which in the name of caste or religion or language or provincialism weaken the fabric of Indian unity.

Finally, today there are two basic issues to which I think all M.Ps and those who are interested in the future of the country should address themselves.

First is the question of production agricultural and industrial, greater and larger procurement of food articles and better distribution of essentials. This is one part.

The second question is : Can violence be allowed to spread and endanger the very basis of our society ?

When I have spoken of the situation in the world or of the dangers surrounding us, it is not to divert the people's attention. In the same speeches, I myself have drawn the attention of the people to the difficulties within the country such as the hardships caused by rising prices and the lack of essential commodities. I know that our farmers are suffering, I know that the people with small industries are suffering for lack of power and lack of other essential articles. When I have stated the international problem it is not to say : Do not think of your difficulty, just concentrate on external dangers. I have very clearly outlined the internal difficulties to the people. I have also admitted that Government cannot be absolved of all blame. But when we consider them, we have also to take note of the considerable achievements which we have been able to have in this period in spite of all difficulties and all obstacles. We have also to note what powerful sections have blocked our programmes. May be, as Shri Goray has said, procurement was not satisfactorily enforced in every State. At the same time, there were influential groups who approached our peasants and advised them against selling their grains. It is no use looking only at one aspect and ignoring others. We are not evading our mistakes. We are trying to make up our shortcomings and to see that if we have failed, we should not fail again. We do not hesitate to make changes even though some people may accuse us of turning back. If we feel that changes are essential for the people's welfare and good, we shall make them regardless of criticism by any side, be they radicals or others. So, we are looking at the

problem not only from the practical point of view, but from the point of view of the nation's future and the welfare of the people. And we have to look at not only the long-term strength of the country and society, but we have also to see to the short-term needs which simply cannot be by-passed. We cannot ignore the present difficulties of the people. We are trying to balance the two and to find a way out. At the same time, I would not be true to my responsibility if I did not point to the external dangers. It is not merely a question of the arms build-up around our country, whether it be in the Indian Ocean or whether it be in certain small and big countries around us. Whenever I have mentioned this, I have also made it clear that it is not to frighten people that I am drawing their attention to this danger. There is no need for us to be panicky. There is no need to be frightened. But the people of India must at all times see their problems in the larger perspective, they must be aware of the dangers which threaten them from within and from without. It is only when they have a true picture that they can judge any issue and democracy can function as it should at the grass-roots level.

The present world situation is in a fluid state, full of uncertainty. Any action or step which encourages confusion and chaos in India adds to this threat. It poses a danger to the unity and security of the country. I am not appealing to my hon'ble friends because I have noted Shri Bhupesh Gupta's annoyance at the appeals to Members of Parliament. But I will say that I hope that without appealing to hon. Members, they will study the situation, especially now that the elections are over. Every time we are blamed that we were waiting for the elections. I do not know about other people. But I can say for myself that I have never got terribly excited by any victory. Even the Bangladesh victory, which was aproud moment for India, did not excite me much though I was happy and I welcomed it. But I was not transported to the seventh heaven as many people were. I was reminding the country of the new problems which the victory would pose for us and I did this in public and in this House also. Similarly, I take defeats. If we are defeated well, it is a part of life. We are not here for winning or losing. We are here to enavour to take India in a particular direction and to work for socialism because we believe in it, not because it is a word which is fashionable or because the people like it. In the present circumstances of India, it is only the Socialist path and direction that can alleviate the ills of the people. It will not bring them victory in a hurry. This will take a very long time. The path is a long and a difficult one. It is the only path which can reduce the inequalities in our society and which can bring a better deal to the poorer sections of the people to those sections and castes which have been suppressed not merely because of poverty, but because of incidence of birth, such as the Harijans and the Adivasis. Because of the circumstances of the partition of the country, our minorities, who would normally not be considered as backward classes, have really fallen into this category of backwardness. So, it is our endeavour to give a better life to all these people. Whether we win or lose in any election or for that matter, anywhere else, so far as this endeavour of ours is concerned, we must not lose our faith, we must not lose our courage and we must not lose our determination. It is in this spirit that we must face the ups and downs that come.

India has existed for thousands of years. How many crises it has passed through and how many periods it has passed through when it was absolutely down and how many

periods we have passed through when we were humiliated, when we did not dare to talk about our religion or our culture or our language ? But we have survived all these vicissitudes. There is something in the people of this country that enables them to survive. If in the first dark period we are going to forget all this, if instead of building up our confidence, we try to reduce it, then it is wrong and this will be the greatest weakness. So, without appealing to hon. Members, I would say this : Let us work unitedly to build up the confidence of the people.

We have got the ability. We have got the means also. I think we have now to move towards our goal. I do not know whether the goal can be attained in the lifetime of even the youngest person in this House. All that we can do is to use all our energies, all our efforts, all our talents, to move some steps forward towards that goal. If we can do that, that is a great deal.

In Defence of Government Policies*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, the last year has been one of extraordinary difficulties for us as well as for a large part of the world. It was not unexpected that many sections of the Opposition should speak with anger and some of them with, if I may say so, malice but there have also been many thoughtful contributions.

Before I begin, I should like to express my deep sympathy to all those who have suffered physically or materially in the Jama Masjid area. Some hon. Members remarked that I have not expressed any sympathy. This is not correct, because after the very first news I got, even though I was not well at that time, I sent a message of sympathy and I kept touch with the Delhi. Administration and the Home Ministry as to what relief was being given. We convey our sincere condolences to all the bereaved families.

There has also been a major calamity in the north, that is, the earthquake in Himachal and I know hon. Members would like us to extend our deepest sympathy. I extend sympathy on behalf of the Government and, if you would allow me, on behalf of the House, to all those who have suffered. It was all the more tragic because the earthquake took place at a time when most communications were blocked because of heavy snow, so that relief could not reach in time to many places. Even now, we do not have the full picture but we have tried our best and people all over India have responded to appeals and given blankets, money and other help. So we send our sympathy to the affected people.

I would also like to say that just a couple of days ago, last Saturday, I was in Tamil Nadu and I heard heart-rending stories of the distress caused by drought. While I was there, there was a drizzle but hardly enough to solve the problem of drinking water, let alone the severe blow to their agriculture and their crops.

Now to come to the points made by hon. Members. One hon. Member said that there was variance in the views expressed in the President's Address and those expressed by my colleague, the Home Minister and myself about reforms in the electoral laws. I have not been able to find any such divergence of opinion. We all are agreed that there should be a debate on this matter. Even in the last Session we had said that we would like to discuss it with members of the Opposition but we do feel that it should be a very wide-ranging, broadbased discussion all over the country. Some committee was formed. I think some of you have seen what suggestions have been made and, if I may say so with due respect, I do not find them very revolutionary.

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *R.S. Deb.*, 26 February, 1975, cc. 155-70.

Amongst the points made, one was problem of small farmers. It is true that originally the green revolution bypassed smaller farmers. As soon as we realised this, we are making efforts to have special programmes for them, for those who live in the drier parts of the country and for marginal farmers. Our country is so vast and the number of people involved is so large that these pogrammes take time to make an impact and even when you can cover lots of people, it is nothing compared to what is to be done. I should like to assure hon. Members that this matter is very much on our minds. Any suggestions which they may have will be welcome.

The retrenchment of workers always creates problems for numbers of people. On the other hand, if a particular project is completed, you cannot say that the work should be dragged on just because there is no alternative employment, but our instructions are that some way should be found, even if it means moving some of these people to some distance, to give them other work.

An hon. Member has spoken about education. He felt that Government does not regard education as a core subject. Now, the word 'core' is generally used in a special connotation, but no one will deny that education is the very core of any society. We should not look at it merely in terms of money or the funds allotted. Today education is being widely discussed all over the world and in India also there is a debate on the sort of educational reforms needed. It is true that funds have been cut not only from education, but from almost every programme, from every State, from every Central Ministry. I must say that my full sympathies are with the Minister of Education and his Ministry in their difficult task. I have asked the Planning Commission to do everything possible to ensure that none of the important programmes or the important changes which are being brought about are affected by these cuts.

It was suggested that scientists and technologists should be encouraged to go to the rural areas. Now, this is of crucial importance to our development and I fully support the hon. Member who has made this point. If hon. Members ever read my speeches they will notice that there is hardly any occasion, connected with science and technology, when I do not stress the point that not only must they go to the rural areas but work there to have a deeper understanding of rural problems. A major portion of our science must be directed to solving rural problems. I am not against fundamental science or basic research. They are important to a country of our size and importance. We will be able to tackle even the problems of basic science better if we are aware of some of the problems which are right on our doorstep. With small inventions, small improvements, in the old materials used for buildings, in improving the bullockcart or the chakki—or grindstone and many other such small matters. I do not think this needs much effort but it would bring immediate relief to millions of housewives and millions of farmers. There is one group of experts, young people—scientists, sociologists, technologists and doctors knit in a small compact group—perhaps hon. Members are aware of this experiment—who is doing work in the rural areas of Ajmer. They are very dedicated. Some of them were in high paid jobs. They have devoted themselves to work in one area and after making a success of it there for three or four years, they are branching out and opening similar centres in other States. Of course, these are still very small islands of work, but their importance is not only in the work achieved

but equally in the fact that they are drawing the attention of other young people. If we can encourage young people from universities to take such interest in constructive activities, it would make a great deal of difference to our country all along the line.

About historical monuments, one hon. Member said that they are not being properly looked after. The Minister must be a little tired of the number of letters I write to him on this subject. I am constantly pursuing the matter. His reply is we do not have enough guards, we do not have enough money. While we are trying to provide them money, frankly I do not think it needs a big amount. We need to make local people more conscious that, these are their treasures. When visitors, tourists or others want to make quick, easy money by selling pictures, sculptures or pieces of architecture it is for the local people to be vigilant. At the same time, we must have adequate guards. This awareness is something which we should somehow include in our school courses so that people of the region recognise the value to the nation of their treasures and how they should be safeguarded. In our treasures I would include not only monuments and architectural treasures, but also the art of the region, the wildlife of the region and the forests of the region. Hon. Members are very anxious to have paper mills and industries, and I am for them too. Please do not think that I am cancelling any licence to a paper mill. But we must not denude our mountainside and our countryside of their forests. This is having an adverse effect on our rainfall and climate. Unfortunately, you do not see the results of such vandalism immediately; when you do realize, it is too late then and it takes years and years to grow trees again. Today we are suffering from what happened during the war. That was when the major deforestation began. So, from now on we must create consciousness amongst all citizens and especially amongst young people. The same goes for wildlife. It is often asked that when people are suffering, why should we bother about animals. But various studies in the West have established that the elimination of any species has a bad effect on the general ecological balance and therefore also affects the human species. Agriculture has suffered because of the indiscriminate use of pesticides. There are pests which we do not like. But nevertheless they serve a useful purpose. Therefore we have to be very careful before we decide that some species can be expendable.

Every now and then one hears that action against smugglers has now been given up or has slackened. I am constantly writing to my colleague about this matter and I am assured that the work has not slackened. The drive is just as hard. Only no, beause the novelty has worn out, it does not get so much publicity. But the matter is being pursued just as hard. We continue to need the help and cooperation of the general public in this matter as in many other matters.

Now, Sir, in a debate like this, it is natural that our shortcomings should be pointed out and attention drawn to the failures of the Government and our Party. But it was saddening for me to hear the very first speaker from the Opposition calling us a Government of failures. I remember how, in the middle of last year, the very next day after our scientists had carried out our peaceful nuclear experiment, there was a meeting of Opposition leaders. But they had not one word of praise to say for the scientists' achievements. They did not have to pay compliments to the Government because I do not regard it as the achievement of the Government. It was the nation's achievement. But the Opposition seems to well

itself with so many small things—and sometimes even with hatred and bitterness–that they can see no good in anything that is happening. It is their own sense of failure which makes them see failure everywhere around them. It is true that achievement also creates problems. It is when you are moving when you are doing things that you can make mistakes. It is only the dead who have no problems. But just because there are problems, it does not mean that there has not been any achievement or any forward movement.

For its part, the Government has started this year, 1975, with a sense of quiet confidence and solid determination. A hesitant government could not have put forward the hard and, if I may say so, almost heroic measures of economic discipline and reached agreements with neighbouring countries—some of these agreements were not so popular—to solve a number of difficult problems and, finally reach the understanding which we have in Jammu and Kahsmir. As I said earlier, I do not wish to claim success for the Government. But I certainly regard these as the successes of the nation. We shall continue to try to solve all problems which have remained unsolved and secure many more such successes for the nation in spite of the Opposition's obstructive defeatism.

The President's Address has given a detailed account of the economic scene. I do not propose to go over the same ground here. It is not surprising that prices went up. They went up here because they are going up all over the world and because of the situation of the last year. It was a matter worth nothing that we managed to bring the price level down in the last five months, which so few other countries have been able to do. It is no use comparing the wages of one country with another. We have also to see where we started from. You cannot make comparisons unless you compare the base from which India started and the level at which our people worked and the level of people in other countries.

Sir, disparaging remarks have been made even about the downward trend of prices. Some people have tried to make out that it was due only to seasonal agricultural factors. No doubt the season has effect on some prices. But surely credit should also be given to the fiscal restraint which was exercised by the Government and the special efforts made in the industrial field, especially by the workers and managers in our public sector establishments. The President has congratulated them and I should like to add mine and your congratulations too.

If hon'ble Members will bear with me, I should like to repeat something which I have said on a couple of occasions outside this House. What has been the situation in the rest of the world ? It is part of my duty to be apprised of what is happening and I have to read a large number of newspapers from different countries. In many of their articles and comments, noted columnists have described the grave economic difficulties which various countries in Europe have been facing in the last year or so. They have written about inflation, rising prices, increasing unemployment, recession. These are the problems before them. But the point which they have stressed is this—that these countries, such as France and Germany, where they follow democratic systems, have strong Opposition parties. Their ruling parties have slender majorities. The prevalent economic situation and the Government's inability to handle it would have been a very convenient target for Opposition parties to use against their Government. And had they used it effectively, perhaps they

could have succeeded in bringing down their Governments. In point of fact this is not happening. Why ? Because they all realise the gravity of the situation. They realise that at a time when the entire economic scene is so fluid in the world, their country's stability is of utmost importance. So although they do criticise but, according to these people, the attack is in a very low key. There is similar comment about the criticism of the situation from the Communist or Eastern bloc of countries. Normally such a situation would have been exploited. They could have said that they had prophesied that the capitalist system would not work. Again, although there is some criticism, it is not the sharp criticism one would expect because they also realise that instability would affect them along with others and that no country can escape the repercussions. Perhaps some hon. friends opposite may contradict me, but so far as my information goes, and I have met some of the leaders of these countries also, even Communist economies have felt the impact of what is happening in Europe. They have not been able to isolate themselves from it. When I spoke about this to somebody in Delhi, he replied : "You see, political parties in these other countries have formed the Government. They know how difficult it is. So they have a greater sense of responsibility". I do not think that this is a valid point. Almost every party here has been part of the Government. It may not have formed the Government at the Centre. But it has had to face most of these problems in one State or another. And so they are aware that it is easier to speak about these things than to bring about major changes. These people have realised, and it is something which everyone must realise, that it needs the whole nation's strength not only to overcome such a situation but even to withstand it. The situation in India is more difficult than in other countries not just because the poverty-line is lower or because there are larger numbers of people to be dealt with, but even because of our size, because we have been growing in strength and self-assurance. This itself has attracted a lot of illwill towards us. So we are subject to various pressures which other countries are not subjected to or they do not mind. Many would just accept a subservient position. But we stand up to pressures, so the situation here becomes very much more complex. I sincerely hope that the parties of the Opposition will also try and view these matters with a greater sense of responsibility.

Sometimes people say that we are putting the blame or shifting the blame for everything that happens on to the Opposition. I can say for myself that I have never said so. I do not say that it is the Opposition which has created the present economic difficulties. But I have said that the Opposition tries to take advantage of the situation in a way that sometimes harms people. When you have massive strikes which aim at bringing the economy to a halt, when grain cannot move, then certainly it is taking an advantage which is not in the general interest of the nation.

Sir, we hear now of people preaching the doctrine of disobedience to public servants, of preaching well, I can only call it mutiny to the army or the police. Has anybody bothered to consider the results of this ? Suppose we face a situation on our borders ? It has nothing to do with the Congress or with any political party. Once you encourage this kind of indiscipline, how do you contain it ? How do you face the enemy ? No thought is being given to these basic problems which, to my mind, are most important. If you do not have discipline in our forces, in our public servants, then no other problems can be solved, neither

by us nor by any other government or by any other party which may hope to form the Government. Some people may think that if they create a situation of anarchy, then the churning of the ocean will yield up the nectar of office for them. But I can only say that if it comes about in this way, it will be very bitter nectar and I doubt if they will be able to swallow it any more than they can swallow poison.

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I should like to plead with the Opposition, persuade them if I can, but certainly caution them as I must, not to follow the politics of destruction and not to weaken the nation at a time when forces around us want India to be weakened so that they can pressurise us to follow the line which is more to their interest.

Much has been said here and outside about the Bihar agitation. Several Parties have formed an axis to wage the agitation and also to carry the torch to other parts of the country. A large number of statements have been made, are being made, which are often conflicting and contradictory. As far as I can see it, why are so many political parties interested ? Are they there disinterestedly ? Is it that they do not want power and they do not want to win elections ? If they are there, it is obviously to capture power. And what is distressing is not that they want to capture power because in politics this is a legitimate aim for any political party and our system allows it but what is distressing is that they want to capture power anyhow, not considering the means.

Those who would lecture us about communalism are themselves unabashedly communal. Some people who say they are non-violent, are co-operating with violent organisations; many who are talking about anti-corruption are certainly cooperating with corrupt individuals. A certificate has even been given to the RSS to the effect that it is only a social service organisation. Anybody who has read the speeches of RSS leaders, made over the last few years, can judge for himself. Have these speeches anything to do with social service or social welfare or cultural subjects ? They are purely political, venomous speeches. Many of them are positively against certain communities in India. And I saw in some newspapers that RSS leaders themselves make no bones about their true aims. In fact, if I may quote : "The line between politics and social service is thin" and again : "We want to influence politics".

These are some of the visible contradictions. One may imagine that they can be temporarily ignored. But they have their impact. This so-called non-violent movement is giving strength to these forces and these groups which will destroy even those who are supporting them today. Such faces have been given respectability. They have been given opportunity to reach out to areas where they had no foothold before. This is extremely dangerous to the future of this country.

As I said, the democratic system provides legitimacy to any normal opposition activities. But the strategy which some opposition parties are following is a selective smear campaign by a very odd collection of self-styled moralists. To blacken the reputation of people in the Government is cynical and also immoral. As I have said on many occasions, if they are against corruption, they should speak out about the corruption of those who are with

them, not only of those who happen to be in the Congress today. It is astonishing to claim that a race of shining knights will be born by the Jan Sangh and Jan Sanghrsh Samitis.

There also seems to be a policy of issuing certificates to some in my party in the hope that they will drive a wedge in the Congress. Well, of course, it is for our Members to decide what they do. I sincerely hope that they will not succeed in this. I believe Congress is too large and too open a party to be undermined by this type of incitement.

Shri Bhupesh Gupta especially referred to our friend and colleague, Shri Lalit Narayan Mishra. He was a man who was loyal to the country and to the people and he did good to friend and foe alike. His death is not a loss merely to our party but to the country. There is no doubt that the wave of hate which was let loose in Bihar and elsewhere culminated in his death. From character assassination to assassination is not a long step. What ghoulish relish the Opposition has shown over his tragic death ! To us, Sir, the death was bad enough. But the manner in which his opponents have tried to make capital out of it is even worse. They have tried to question the progress of the investigation and they have questioned even the appointment of a Supreme Court Judge. The assassination came as a great shock. And I thought that this very shock would help us to pull ourselves together and realise where these agitations were leading us and to feel that the time has come when things had gone far enough. To cry halt and take a new look at what is happening.

Nobody denies the need for reform. Earlier I spoke both about electoral reforms and edcuational reforms. But this is not the way to bring about reforms. Far from it. We are creating violence and indiscipline in educational institutions, which will be very difficult to remove of any time. If people believe in non-violence they should not be free and ready to provide alibi for violence. Corruption is bad and has to be rooted out. I spoke earlier of pests. Just as the pests eat up our crops, corruption also eats into the foundations of our national life and it must be exterminated as pests are exterminated. But we should take care that the pesticide which kills the pests does not kill all life and that is what I feel these agitations are trying to do. There is need for a national campaign for cleaning the nation of the corrupt and the corruptors. But first of all the anti-corruption effort should be channelised along clean lines, and legal lines. Charges against those in public life can be gone into by people who are capable of sifting evidence. The public cannot take action. But we do want popular help in pointing out corruption where they have personal knowledge of it. There may be corruption in the administration or in the Government and it should be rooted out. There is no question about that. But we know there is also corruption at the lower levels and you cannot deal with one and not with the other. At the lower levels we need the help of the people especially those who live in the neighbourhood and who may have greater information as to what is happening in their areas. And, if they feel strong, about these matters, if students feel concerned, then they should try to find out the facts and come out to help. I can assure them that in this they would have our support. But this does not mean that they are free to beat up people or set fire to buildings. I am sure that anybody who will look carefully at this matter will agree that corruption cannot be counteracted by the kind of agitations which are themselves financed by corrupt elements. That is merely a way of hoodwinking the public and the nation.

My name has also been bandied about. I do not know what to say because all kinds of allegations have been made, starting from 1953, or some such date. My life has been as open as anybody's life in the country...(*Interruptions*). I am not one of those who believe in the accumulation of money or property. There was nothing to urge me to give away my ancestral property. But now when matters are raised, I can only say, as I have said before, that nothing wrong has been done and that I would never countenance any such thing being done in my name or by anybody near to me. All the questions that have been asked in the House have been fully answered time and again. Whatever people's intentions may be, today an atmosphere of witch-hunting is being created–there is selective attack on certain people.

On the larger question of proprieties and improprieties, we should evolve certain national procedures through the wisdom of our public opinion and our Parliamentary prudence. Some countries have adopted the method of street corner tribunals. But is this what we want in our country ? Has there not been great injustice where such decisions have been left to the public ? The guilty may receive punishment, but along with them quite a lot of other people get involved merely because of private quarrels or disagreements.

Why do we use the word "witch-hunting" ? I do not know how many hon. members have studied that period of British history. Suddenly an atmosphere was created that certain women were indulging in witchcraft. If you did not like a particular woman, you left a black doll or some such token in a corner of her house. People would come and search and declare "Oh! this woman is a witch; she should be burnt". It was the most horrifying period of history. Some years ago there was a play on this subject, which my father and I attended. But I had read about these happenings much earlier. This is how this phrase came into being. It was not as if there were real witches, hunted by people. Suddenly a hysteria would be created. Calculated innuendo would arouse suspicion and the public would get agitated.

Now this also gives rise to corruption. Corruption is not of one kind; it is of many kinds. Public morality and behaviour cannot be promoted by elevating gherao or rowdyism into satyagraha or condoning actions of disorderly groups of youth against teachers as our friend said yesterday, or any other group. We now have a situation where youth power is not being directed into constructive channels. Sometimes it is said : See what has happened in China. But it has only happened with the most tremendous discipline and hard work, not just by people deciding who is going to teach what and how ?

The other day I made a statement about our understanding with Sheikh Abdullah. I was surprised—not that day but a couple of days earlier—to hear the remarks of an hon. Member—when he said that we had come to this agreement since Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah was now for the Congress. This is a ridiculous-statement. It is not a question of personal or party agreement, but of national commitment.

If we have been able to come to some conclusions, it is because it seems to us that Sheikh Sahib has publicly committed himself to certain basic points to which we have always subscribed. Sheikh Sahib changed his views but we remained on firm ground. When

he decided to rejoin us on our ground, which is a national and not a party ground, we thought that we should take cognizance of it. Members know that Sheikh Sahib was in the thick of the freedom struggle from 1935, that is when I first remember seeing him. He played a major role in arousing the consciousness of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He formed the National Conference which was part of the State's people's movement for independence. He directed the people of Jammu and Kashmir towards secularism and a more progressive social outlook. In those days this was not easy because of the pulls of the Muslim League and other factors. He and his colleagues had to work hard and we all worked closely together for the common aim, that is, the independence of India, of which Jammu and Kashmir was integral part. Late, there was some disagreement and the Government of India did not hesitate to take action. Sheikh Sahib now says that there was a misunderstanding and that we did not take the trouble to fathom the true facts. I do not want to go into all that history. I am only trying to explain that in spite of what happened in the intervening period, if Sheikh Sahib now seems to have returned to the national mainstream, we should all welcome this and we should understand that if it is not easy for us, it is even more difficult for him. It is very dfifficult to come back and if I can take you into confidence, he is very angry with me personally because he feels that I, not personally as Indira Gandhi but as head of the Government,—have been responsible for his imprisonment for so many years. All this bitterness is directed fortunately not towards India, but towards me. It is not easy for him to forget the past suddenly. But we have both tried to reach an understanding so that a new chapter can be opened. This does not mean that the people of Kashmir were not with us. The people have been loyal and have worked for us. I mean they worked for Kashmir because they realised that the interest of Kashmir was linked with India on account of our basic policies. In fact, this is what Sheikh Sahib himself used to say earlier and he is saying it again. So, this is a new experiment and I sincerely hope that this experiment will work. But it will need a great deal of understanding. I do not think we should get excited by small things or by a word which is uttered. It will take time before the things are evenly balanced and we can progress along the road to understanding. I am glad that, leaving a small group of professional dissenters, the nation has overwhelmingly welcomed the agreement. Perhaps, hon. Members have heard that even the hartal which was asked for by the Jana Sangh has not been successful. I think this is because of the understanding appeals to the good sense of our people. They realised that it is statesmanship to solve a problem which has grown over the years and that vision and goodwill can cut any political Gordian knot. I think vision and goodwill have been displayed by Sheikh Abdullah, Syed Mir Qasim and all the people who have handled the question from outside. I give my good wishes to the Government and the people of Jammu and Kashmir for their progress so that they will continue to make even greater contribution to the political life of the nation of which they are an integral and inalienable part. I referred just now to the Jana Sangh hartal. Perhaps those of us who have studied politics will not be surprised that the Jana Sangh from inside and Pakistan from outside should be opposed to this understanding. This is another proof that communalist forces always hang together. Proceeding from opposite directions, they manage to clasp hands. Anything that strengthens secularism is and has been repugnant to Pakistan.

The other day I purposely did not speak about Mr. Bhutto because this matter is a purely domestic one and we resent any outside interference in our affairs, which is what Mr. Bhutto's call for hartal amounts to. Had we said anything at all about what is happening in Baluchistan and the North Eastern Frontier, how would he have reacted? He and his friends in other countries are raising the issue of Sikkim. Hon. Members have, perhaps, noticed that it was in that very week—what a strange coincidence—that Pakistan very quietly took over the State of Hunza but not a whisper, not a sound either out of China or the U.S. or by any of our newspapers, for that matter. Nobody has commented on it. But there is always a hue and cry when we do something. We earnestly hope that on further reflection, Mr. Bhutto will appreciate that we wish sincerely to resolve Indo-Pakistan differences by bilateral discussions and in accordance with the Simla Agreement and that this understanding on Kashmir which we have reached will be a help and not a hindrance to the normalization of relations with Pakistan. But, of course, the path is strewn with difficulty. I think Pakistan's new belligerancy coincides with the beginning of the fresh flow of arms. The moral of this coincidence should not be lost on the world. It is totally specious to argue that arms should be supplied to Pakistan because we in India are developing a self-sufficient defence industry. I think it is dishonest to argue that our nuclear research poses a danger to Pakistan. As we have said time and again, our investigation of peaceful uses of nuclear energy poses no military threat to any one. The decision of the U.S. to resume the arming of Pakistan shows that the policy makers of that great country continue to subscribe to the fallacy of equating Pakistan and India. It is this policy which has caused tension on the sub-continent. This decision amounts to the reopening of old wounds and hinders the process of healing and normalization towards which we have been working so persistently.

I do not intend to go into a greater details about our relations with foreign countries. The President's Address gives a succinct account of the improvement of relations with our neighbouring countries, near and far. Difficult problems await us in the field of international economic diplomacy and our success depends upon the internal strength and unity that we can generate in our country. This is the special reason why efforts to create doubts, division and disarray should be halted. Our economy is on the mend but we are not yet out of trouble. To carry forward this process of recovery, all our energies are required. The economy will not improve if political quarrels continue to divert the people's attention from these basic problems and even prevent democracy from functioning as it should. As I have said earlier, opposition parties have every right to seek power. But they should do so by spelling out their policies and securing the people's approval for those policies.

Today the opposition axis is vague about their economic policies and their foreign policies. In fact, they are so busy with programmes for agitations that I do not know whether they have any time to think about policies or discuss them or to notice what is happening all around.

This agitational group includes all those who are dead-set against non-alignment and even trade with socialist countries. They want us to move away from the Soviet Union which has been our consistent friend in our times of trouble.

One hon. Member advised us to be greater friends with China. I do not want to talk on this subject. It has been discussed on so many occasions. Isn't it rather strange that people wish us to deny a friend who has stood by us, who has never put any pressure on us nor made any demands on us on the baseless assumption that we may barter away our independence. On the other hand, whose friendship do they promote? Those people who do not want our friendship, those people who do not take our outstretched hand, those people with whom friendship is not as warm as it should be. It is not because we have been found wanting. It is because of what they have done and what they have said and what they are saying that our relationship is cool.

Opposition groups include parties who have the quaintest notions about social equality and social justice. There is one group whose record of dealings with the Scheduled Castes is most unsavoury. So, it becomes our duty to guard the nation against all these internal weakening forces as well as external enemies. The Government will not be found wanting in this duty. My effort has been to lift the sights of the Government and the nation higher. I know that we have made many mistakes. I know that there have been shortfalls in our programmes, some of which are due to our own errors and some due to events and happenings beyond our control. But, can any country just keep looking at the difficulties and the shortfalls and the failures ?

One hon. Member complained that the President's Address has not spoken of the future. I think it has given direction for the future. You can only reach the future if you walk towards it. What are most of the opposition parties doing? They are not looking at the future. They are just looking at their feet. They are trying to rake up as much mud as they can so that all problems are obscured—the basic problems, the basic vision of the people is obscured. They are raising doubts in the people's minds about their own capacity. We need resources, we need money, we need equipment, we need machinery and we need raw materials. But, if we do not have, if the nation does not have, self-confidence then all those things will not help the nation to go ahead. It does not matter how much funds Shri Subramaniam can raise or how much he can set apart for various items. We are trying our best to save. But, without self-confidence and without a clear direction, the nation cannot go forward.

A large country like India must act with an inner conviction of its strength. I have tried to devote my life to build a tolerant India, a secular India and a peaceful India. I wish to continue to work for it and devote all my energy for it and, if necessary, die for it. Let us not be bogged down in petty squabbles which diminish the nation. Let us deploy our strength to face the issues which affect the long-term interests of our people.

Sir, I hope that those who have put in amendments will withdraw them and that the House will accept this Motion.

A Bird's Eye-View of Government Policies*

Mr. Deputy-Speaker. Sir, yesterday we had a meeting of Members of Parliament to renew our allegiance to the Constitution. As I sat there watching the portraits of the luminaries of our independence struggle and thought of the speeches one hears and the remarks and comments that are quite often made outside and also about what Indians say when they go abroad, I wondered why it is that so many people think that to serve the country means to condemn it. So often when people get together or meet foreigners, they seem to find pleasure in decrying what has been done here. I doubt if there is another land where elected representatives and others are so given to running down their own system, their own people and even, if I may say so, themselves.

I do not know if this is some deep-seated psychological malady. So far as the Opposition is concerned, it cannot be merely because they are out of power, because all of them have formed governments in one State or the other. When they had their SVDs, UDFs and other initials there was the same inadequacy and a kind of imbalance. Unfortunately, some in my own Party also lack confidence and are best with pessimism.

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The Opposition has every right to criticise the executive. In fact, democracy is the one and only political system which assigns a recognised role to the Opposition. But in parliamentary democracy, the Opposition also has a responsibility not to obstruct policies which are voted upon by the Parliament. Once they are voted upon by the Parliament, they are not just the policies of a party, they become national policies. This understanding is lacking.

Some people—political parties and groups—are candid enough to admit their lack of faith in parliamentary democracy, but still would like to remain to wreck the system from inside. Others swear by parliamentary democracy without accepting any of its elementary conventions. Today an agitation is being carried on in the name of cleansing the system or altering it. So far as I can make out, they are not sure themselves of their real objectives. Several ideas have been put forward in rapid succession. At first scrapping the present representative institutions in favour of indirect rule through people's committees, and this by people who strongly dislike the Soviet idea which began in the same way. Next, majority rule was criticised and a proposal was made for proportional representation. Now it is said

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *L.S. Deb.*, 27 February, 1975, cc. 242–60.

that elections will be fought within the present system but without money. Yet vast amounts of money are being used for their demonstrations. Where does it come from ? The present agitation is based on false premises and that is why it has taken a wrong turn. The whole campaign is giving a handle to our foes and detractors in other countries. The extra-ordinary interest which some outside people have taken in this agitation and campaign is also not a little suspicious.

There was much fanfare about a committee to reform electoral law.

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I am not trying to cut any ice.* At the moment I am trying to get some thoughts through you.

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The people who see money being spent those are the people who believe.**

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From time to time these figures are mentioned in the newspapers also, not just by us.

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Anyway, after much fanfar a committee was formed to reform the electoral law. I have not seen the report. I have seen some summaries which have appeared in the newspapers. I am sorry I do not have the cuttings or the names of the newspapers !

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Why cannot I comment on something which has appeared in print ?***

Now, it has suggested some peripheral changes but no new scheme to replace the basic electoral system so far as I could make out from those comments. It recommends that a new system should be evolved by consensus. What else have I been saying ? And may I ask : did the Constituent Assembly not represent such a consensus ? Are the present agitators wiser, abler, more dedicated, more farseeing, better endowed with legal, constitutional and political insights and experience than the remarkable group of men and women who drew up our Constitution ?

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* Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's comments, "These do not seem to be cutting any ice with the people. You have overplayed these things".

** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's questions "What is the basis ? You say vast sums of money are being invested. Who believes you ?"

*** Replying to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's remark, "Please do not comment".

No Mr. Mody, they had stated themselves that they were not infallible and certain changes would be needed*. This does not mean that we should throw out the Constitution, lock stock and barrel. The main grouses seem to be that the Constitution works and the anger against the Government also is that in spite of the fact that we are not, we do admit, as efficient as we should be and we would like to be, the Government also works. The system that they seems to be advocating at present is one in which there will be increased production without factories working, Government is to function better while its employees are attending rallies and are absent from their posts of duty. The executive they want to instal in the place of the present Government is one which would have the brain of the CPI (M), the heart of the Cong. (O), the tongue and the lungs of the Socialist Party and the hands and feet of the Jan Sangh... (*Interruptions*)

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I disagree with what hon. Member Shri Gopalan said, but what a relief to have arguments, even wrong ones, softly spoken ! Is he really serious when he states that the rights of religious minorities are being suppressed ? We know that there are incidents, some of them serious, and all of them we deeply deplore and condemn. We must do everything possible administratively and otherwise to see that these incidents do not recur. I should like to take this opportunity of expressing my deep sorrow at the happenings in the Jama Masjid area and my sincere sympathy to all who suffered there. There were similar incidents elsewhere, including one in Bombay which calls for great sorrow.

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If the police are responsible they should be condemned, whoever is responsible should be condemned, but the very fact that such incidents take place is a blot on the country as a whole, whoever may be responsible**. It is a question of social attitudes and the way we let emotions get the better of us sometimes. But if there is anything of which our people are legitimately proud, (with certain exceptions of communal elements) and which the world as a whole recognises in India, it is the equal rights and unfettered freedom which the followers of all religions enjoy in our country.

It is not necessary for me to embark on a full review of the economic scene, because the President's Address has dealt with the question. But I should like to correct some misunderstandings and misapprehensions. There has been quite a controversy on both sides of the House about the Minister of Industry's remarks regarding private participation in public undertakings. Because of the shortage of resources and in order to give the people a greater sense of participation in national projects my colleague suggested that the investing public might also subscribe to a part of the capital of a public undertaking. This was a proposal for discussion. If you like you could call it food for thought. It certainly does not mean that Government is going to disinvest or that private participation is going to be allowed in all public undertakings.

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* Replying to Shri Piloo Mody's remark, "That was your contention when the constitutional amendments were passed here ; you thought you were wiser than they".

** Responding to a Member's suggestion, "You condemn the police atrocities".

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Some public undertakings already have some private holding either because they existed earlier or because the formation agreements allowed it, and this has not in any way altered their basic character. If at all such a policy is to be adopted, it has to be done very carefully and on a case to case basis. There is absolutely no question of a sell out of the public sector nor of allowing large house sand others like them to enter this field.

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That is a matter that is being discussed.* If there are difficulties we should see how they can be overcome; if they cannot be overcome, some other way may have to be found. The question is whether savings should be mobilised only through taxes or can the public at large contribute in some way directly to public investment ? When savings are dispersed and funds are necessary for public investment, can there be a method of direct investment of such savings ? These are the questions which we have to consider and I would certainly like the views of the hon. Members opposite. I believe the Government of Kerala did some such thing. It had the right idea when it mobilised capital from the rural people in every district of Kerala for a coastal shipping centre. This is the way in which one could involve people in what is happening in their state and their district.

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This is a particular way of mobilising public saving. Some people speak of the public sector as though it was solely their concern. Not so long ago, the public sector was decried day in and day out and every attempt was made to dispense with it. But we did not lose heart. We stood firm and expanded it to cover many important area. It has grown big and is doing well. I am sure it will grow further and do even better and play a crucial role in our national life. And I hope, even Mr. Mody will welcome it.

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It has already started performing.**

Some hon. Members have complained that very little progress has been made in irrigation during the last 25 years. This is far from true. Our irrigation potential has been doubled from 22 million hectares to 44 million hectares. Because of this and the corresponding increase in food production, we have been able to look after ourselves in good years, and only in bad years do we have to make marginal imports. But we must make every effort and we must work towards a situation in which we can support ourselves in good and bad years and also accumulate reserve stocks. I do not think it is fair to our farmers or to our agricultural scientists and many research programmes to say that nothing has been achieved in the field of agriculture.

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* Replying to Shri Indrajit Gupta's remark, "How do you prevent that ?"

** Replying to Shri Piloo Mody's question, "When will it start performing?"

75 major irrigation projects and 155 medium projects are now under various stages of implementation. We hope that most of them will be completed in the next 4 to 5 years, so that a susbstantial irrigation potential can be added. There is also scope for more economic use of water and better utilisation of the available irrigation potential. I have given instructions that special attention should be paid to these aspects, because we all realise how very important this is to our economy and our future.

Some hon. Members expressed anxiety about the delay in settling inter-State water disputes. We all share this concern, but all of you know with what difficulties the problem bristles. Water is a State subject and issues have to be settled mainly between the concerned States themselves. We at the Centre have been doing our utmost to bring the States together. One hon. Member accused the Centre of taking a partisan attitude in the case of a particular dispute. I would say this is wholly unjustified. The Centre has been trying hard to bring about a just settlement of disputes whether regarding the Cauvery, the Narbada or any other. However, such matters are surcharged with emotion. Hon. Members know that as soon as such a question arises, all party divisions are wiped out. Instead of getting together on something positive, we only get together on such issues. Even if a reasonable proposal is made, nobody is willing to agree, for fear of criticism and unpopularity in his own region. If it is fair, then both sides consider it unjust. There was a proposal of declaring water as a national asset. I am all for it and if need be, (with Mr. Mody's permission!) to amend the Constitution to enable us to do it. But the consent of the States is necessary and most of them have disapproved this move. I would appeal to all parties not to politicalise this vital question but to adopt an attitude of give and take, keeping in mind not only the local interest, which is of course important, but the overall national interest.

One hon. Member considered Government's policies to be anti-farmer. In fact, this is a slogan that is often repeated in some parts of the country. Others accuse us of being pro-Kulak. We are neither. All these years it has been our effort to make all that is necessary to increase agricultural production—water, electricity, fertilizers, or improved seeds—all these things are made available at reasonable prices, and to ensure that the farmer gets remunerative prices for his produce. During the last two years, agricultural prices rose steeply and farmers had a good return. When there is some fall in prices, there are complaints. But how can prices come down generally unless there is some fall in the price of agricultural commodities, industrial raw materials and finished goods ?

I was astonished to hear, even though the speech was in Tamil, from one hon. Member that we are callous to the drought in Tamil Nadu, and that although I had gone to the State, I did not express any sympathy to the people there. This is an extraordinary charge. On the contrary, I had several functions there and in almost every one of them I spoke of my deep concern. I am told the Member even blamed the Congress for the drought in the State. How I wish I did have that much control over the clouds! As it is, it did drizzle while I was there, but not enough to meet their needs, their urgent needs.

Droughts have done enormous harm to us, and a succession of droughts and wars have put us back by a decade. Even more worrying is the damage that drought cause to young people and children and to their physical and mental development, even though relief

programmes have prevented starvation. No State Government should make drought an occasion to try to get as much money as it can from the Centre, and every effort must be made to see that what is available and the funds that come from the Centre are properly used and reach the people who are in greatest need. But national sympathy should not be measured merely in terms of funds; it should be measured in the efffectiveness with which relief is rendered. Water conservation works should be built. This would help if the rain should fail again Government itself could mobilise the local people to do as much of this work as possible, instead of engaging contractors who might exploit the people for their own ends.

Earlier on, other States like Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal had an equally bad experience, the after effects of which will long be felt. Our sympathy also goes out to all those who have suffered from earthquake in Himachal Pradesh. Sitting here we think it is cold in winter. But, can we imagine not being able to have the shelter of a roof in sub-zero temperatures day after day ? This is what the people there had to face before relief could reach them.

One of the amendments urges the taking over of the wholesale trade in all the essential commodities, and another is about nationalisation. Hon. Members know that we are trying to improve the distribution as well as the production of basic essentials of domestic use. But obviously, we can undertake only as much as we can manage at any given time. Yet, I am fully conscious that a very vigilant eye should be kept on private trade to prevent them from exploiting the consumer.

I have expressed my views on nationalisation many times. Nationalisation by itself does not improve performance, unless we have the organisational and managerial ability to make it a success. We are now busy modernising what we had earlier nationalised. But, for all this we need awareness in the public and their cooperation.

Some members have stated that perhaps the drive against smugglers is slackening. That is not so. I am kept in touch with the situation. I have reminded my colleagues and I am assured that they are pursuing the drive. But public cooperation and information is very important.

A complaint was also made about the delay in the Industrial Relations Bill. We are trying to expedite it. But in such a complex matter we must carry people with us. So, various aspects of the Bill are being considered in detail by a Cabinet Committee.

I was also astonished to hear from an hon. Member that it is I who was propagating a snap poll. I am sure, nobody has heard me say that there would be a snap poll. I have been asked questions to which I have given very clear negative replies.

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You should see that they are not deprived.* I certainly do not want to deprive them. Normally we do not pay sufficient attention to electoral rolls. It is not only today that I have remarked on it. At every meeting I tell my party to enrol voters. We did tell the Election Commissioner not to delay this work. But it did not mean....

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Then they should do it properly.** Hon. Members will please note that all these suggestions always emanate from that side and we are blamed for them, whether there will be a poll or there will not be.

Shri Shyamnandan Babu's suggestion that all major issues should be discussed is a welcome one. I have said this before. I am prepared to start at once. I do not think we should always bother about who approaches whom. We should try to meet half-way so that somehow the meeting begins. Every time we get bogged down in an argument as to who spoke to whom and whether the right person was informed or not informed. If the Opposition wants to function as a unit, one of them take the responsibility, not of expressing the views of all because that would be impossible, but just of consulting them.

My point is that all these controversial and major issues should be discussed not only by us in the House but all over the country, asking the people's opinion on them.

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That was in reply to a very specific question***. The name and everything was mentioned. It had nothing to do with the Opposition parties sitting here.

One B.K.D. Member who spoke here felt that I was standing on prestige. I can assure him that this is not so. No engine works if it is not kept in constant repair. No system will work well without vigilance. As I have said time and again, even the best of houses cannot avoid decay if dirt and cobwebs are not removed. We know that there are shortcomings in the administrative system, and perhaps, in the electoral system. But I do not think these shortcomings are in principles; they are only in the way of working. These we are anxious to correct. We are ready to consider every constructive suggestion and take counsel with any individual or group who is interested. Perhaps we can have a sort of round-table discussion on electoral reforms as one of the subjects.

Having been an "angry" young person myself, although it was quite some time ago, I can appreciate Shri Sharad Yadav's anger and I understand his attitude. I welcome him to the House and, I hope, he will inject a constructive freshness and originality here, and not get swept off by the jaded politics of those who surround him. He has spoken of minorities and Scheduled Castes. As I said a little while ago the situation with regard to these leaves

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* Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's question, "Why did the Government ask the Election Commissioner to expedite the revision of eletoral rolls in a hurry so that lakhs of voters are being deprived of their valuable right ?"

** In reply to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark, "It has not been done properly".

*** Responding to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's questions, "You have told the country about dialogue. Dialogue with whom and for what ? What kind of dialogue ?"

much to be desired. But which country, with a long history of religious strife, has been able to overcome it in a few years as we have ?

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It has not worsened.* This is not true. Many problems such as unemployment are part of the general economic malaise. They do hit the weaker sections more, and in that sense a person belonging to a minority community or a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe is affected more. But it is part of the general situation. Atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are evidence of the fight against centuries-old entrenched social attitudes. Instead of wasting our breath blaming one another, we should forge a united front to change such anti-social attitudes and to help these weaker sections in every way.

Young people are worried about the use of MISA for students. I must say that I myself have been very unhappy about it. But I should like my young friends and also my old friends to find out how student disturbances have been, and are being, dealt with in all the countries around us and even in far-off ones ? Which country has been so lenient and tolerant towards agitations ? Some young people may be arrested here, but compared to the population of students, this is a small number. Even so, I deplore this; I am not condoning it; but I am mentioning it only so that the problem can be seen in proper perspective. And whenever we say anything about India let us consider with which ideal country or society we are comparing ourselves.

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Just as all kinds of people rushed to join us, we see that many undesirable elements and corrupt persons are jumping on to the bandwagon of the present agitation.**

Corruption forms the centre of any debate. Charges are made without any shred of evidence. The test seems to be not "Is it true?" but "Is he on our side or on the other side?" A campaign is being carried on to the effect that, if you remove Congress, you remove corruption. It does not matter if, to fight the Congress you take support and money from the most corrupt groups and individuals. As the President has said the Lokpal and Lokayukta Bill is before the House. Several States have already either adopted Bills or made some arrangements of their own, and I sincerely hope that it will be passed quickly here also. But corruption is of many kinds and it permeates different levels. I have earlier, mentioned the need for greater vigilance by citizens—men and women—over the affairs of their neighbourhood. And I personally think that that will go a very long way as a corrective to cleaning up our society; whether it is a question of hoarders or black-marketeers, the people who live in that area are the people who know most and they are the people who should be able to help.

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* Replying to a Member's remark, "It has worsened".

** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark, "Let us have a firm declaration that MISA would not be used against political persons or groups".

There is no corruption in Maruti.* Since the hon. Member has raised it, I can say that every question that has been asked has been replied to; nothing wrong has been done; no special favour should be, or has been, given because it is concerned with the Prime Minister's son.

What I was saying is that we are just as anxious as anybody else to remove corruption. I do not want to go into the details. I have earlier spoken about the stage by stage actions we have taken. I have said it in public meetings and I have discussed it with leaders. But today there seems to be a very selective type of campaign or accusation. Corruption will not go in this way. If the real intention is to remove corruption, then it must be an honest way of dealing with it at every level....

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Just a couple of days ago I made a statement on Kashmir and soon we shall have a debate in the House. I should only like to reiterate that there was nothing surreptitious which some people are trying to hint at. All relevant papers have been made available. We welcome Sheikh Sahib back to our fold and into the national mainstream. We have taken a big step and so has he. Constitutional and political clauses and nuances matter, but I think that even more important is the overcoming of the bitterness of the past, so that the future can be based on trust. I sincerely hope that the mutual confidence which has made the agreement possible, will continue to mark the relationship between the new regime of the State and the rest of the country.

It is a matter of regret that our neighbour should think it fit to interfere in our domestic matters. No matter what we do or say, we seem to be pounced upon. Prime Minister Bhutto chose to criticise Sikkim, the very week he himself had quietly deposed the ruler of Hunza which is in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Neither the foreign press nor our own press paid much attention to it. Had we spoken about the tragedies and sufferings of Baluchistan or the North West Frontier Province, we would not have heard the end of it yet.

On the US arms supplies to Pakistan there are no two voices in India. It is natural that we should feel strongly, for it is we who have been the victims of Pakistani belligerency, time and again. The arms build-up and militarisation of the whole region is bound to increase the tension in the Indian Ocean. All this will cause deep anxiety and will increase the need for greater vigilance and preparedness.

This year is International Women's Year.

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The importance is not only in what happens to the individual woman but because of the influence when mothers wield on the younger generation during the most formative years of their growth. We do want this year to be one which will highlight the role of women in contemporary society. How women who form just under half the population

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* Replying to Shri Janeshwar Mishra's question, "What about Maruti?"

can participate in transforming society, in bringing about reforms and the more rational and modern thinking in society, which is so necessary for our progress. But we do not wish the problem to be considered merely as a women's problem. We think it concerns men and women. And they must both work together to make it a success.

May I tell a story which is a little old ? I think it happened in the fifties. The Secretary-General of the International Union for Child Welfare came to Delhi. A programme was arranged for him in a nearby village. There were the usual speeches, garlanding and so on. When it was all over, he said, "I have brought my own interpreter and I would like to remain back. I would like my hosts and others to return." So, everybody came back. This was told to me by the gentleman himself. He wandered around until he came across a group of old men. He surmised that they might have an entirely different point of view. He asked them, "What is the major change since Independence?" And one of the old men, after some thought, said : "Our women and children are much more alive now". The visitor was astonished at this answer and asked : "Do you think this is a good thing or not? Do you welcome it?" And the reply was : "Had you asked us some years earlier we would have said, we don't want this to happen, but now that we see the difference it has made to our homes and to the village and we think it is a good thing." At the time I was the Vice-President of the International Union. That is how I came to know of the Secretary-General's experience.

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We know that much is wrong in our society. But the question is whether it will be or can be corrected by encouraging indiscipline,—indiscipline in the army, indiscipline in the police, indiscipline in Government service. Only dedicated and disciplined hard work can give new direction. India can hope for a glorious future only if our bright young people and our experienced old people take a creative and constructive attitude. Of course, many of us are middle aged and I don't exclude them.

In trying to change society democratically, many told us that we were attempting the impossible. But my faith in mankind and in the Indian people is boundless. I know that they have the capacity to transform the impossible into the possible. But, is it not the task of all of us here to give them that direction, that guidance and that support which they will need in this great task?

Reaffirming Faith in Democracy*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, may I start with the last point mentioned by the honourable Member opposite, Shri Bhupesh Gupta, Chasnalla is very much on the minds not only of those sitting here but of the entire nation. These last days since we first heard of the calamity, our thoughts and our sympathies have been with the families of the miners who are trapped there. We do not yet know whether it is possible to save them, but we dare not give up hope until the very last moment. But we do offer our sincere prayers and send our deep sympathy to the affected families. It may be true, as Shri Gupta said, that all the safety measures have not been taken. I do not know. That is why we have instituted a judicial inquiry which will give its report soon—well, it will take some time before it can start, but once it starts, it will give it soon—and whatever remedies they suggest, even if it is too late to help the people in this particular case, will be a pointer for safety in future in all mining projects.

This debate has been understandably largely concerned with the declaration of emergency. I have spoken on this matter at the earlier session of Parliament and I do not have much that is new to say. My colleagues who have spoken from this side have very ably put forward our case. It is not true that the world has not understood it. If you think that the world consists of just half a dozen countries, then perhaps what you are saying is correct. But the non-aligned world, the socialist world and many other countries have expressed their full understanding of the situation in India, the reasons because of which emergency had to be proclaimed and the fact that we have acted entirely according to our Constitution. I do not want to go into the question of what the Press either here or abroad would have said or has said because other Members have drawn attention to what they have been saying about India these many months and years, long before the emergency was declared. We know where they stood at the time of Bangladesh. At that time there were no Press curbs; nobody was under detention here; nobody could say that there were curbs on democracy. But the Press of which today the Members of the Opposition speak, apart from some exceptions, mostly the Press and many governments stood on the other side; they stood on the side of the nations which made no pretence of democracy. Today also we find no criticism of those countries which do not have Parliament, which do not have elections, which do not have a free Press of any kind except, the government Press. No. All this opposition, all the accusations, the allegations, these are reserved only for India. And why ? because they say that they expected something different from India ! We are special angels dropped from the sky; we are so good that we cannot even be helped. Before

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *R.S. Deb.*, 8 January, 1976, cc. 218-240.

we had committed anything or we can be said to have curbed democracy, let us remember that we got precious little help when we were dealing with the refugees from Bangladesh, and some help was even cut off at that very critical time in our national history.

I was interested to hear what Mr. Goray said. He came to see me sometimes ago. He had written to me. He was in America at that time and he wrote from there. I asked a question in my reply to his letter. He has not replied to that question. And I would like to ask that question not only of Mr. Goray but also of some of his other colleagues, the learned Mr. Joshi and others. They are very much concerned today about the demise of democracy; they are concerned when some body says something about other people. But we did not hear their voices when the Gujarat Assembly was being removed in an entirely undemocratic, unconstitutional manner. They did not raise their voices when the same thing was sought to be repeated in Bihar. We did not hear their voices when there was the threat of *satyagraha* on the floor of the House or when a Member of this hon. House wanted to go and occupy the chair of the Secretary. We did not...

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I am glad.* I do not know how many others have done that.

It is a motley crowd. Somebody said "Why do you lump together all these people?" It is not we who are lumping people together. It is they who have lumped themselves together of their own free choice. Who has forced these parties to come together. Has anybody threatened "If you don't come together, we will murder you", as we have been told "If you don't do this, you will be murdered?" They were not being intimidated. They have entered into these alliances, the Janata Morcha or whatever you like to call it, of their own free will. If Shri Goray is today aligned with the RSS and the Jan Sangh, it is his choice. It is not we who have asked him to go along with those people.

We point out to what is known history. All these things are in print. I am not inventing them. I cannot give the date and the figure, but I can produce that literature—I have it in my house, I have it in my office here—all the speeches the Jan Sangh the R.S.S. made about Mahatma Gandhi, about my father. Today the examples of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru are put before me. But they do not care to see and to read what was said about them in their life-time. And are we to believe that they have changed their policy today ? Are we to believe that there has been a change of heart in parties that are so deeply rooted in violence, in hatred ? Shri Joshi complained about the use of the word 'Fascism'. May be he does know what it means, but I do claim to know what it means I was in Europe when there was Fascism. And when we had an anti-Fascist conference in Patna, to which Shri Bhupesh Gupta referred, there were many delegates there who had been in Hitler's concentration camps. They were not speaking of something that they had read about in books. There were people whose families had suffered. They knew what it meant to be under a Fascist regime. So when they spoke about Fascism, it was from personal experience. I wonder what personal experience Shri Joshi has had. You can read a lot of books, but I

* Responding to Shri N.G. Goray's observation : "I have dissociated my party from that".

do not think you can know what it means unless you have seen it happen with your own eyes. It is just like those people here who talks sometimes about freedom, who have had nothing to do with the freedom struggle. They cannot know what it meant to us at that time. It was not a question of being in prison. It was not a question of being beaten up by the police or having bayonets stuck into your chest by the British military. That was not the hard part of it. It was the constant humiliation of the Indian nation. This is what they did not realise at that time. At that time they were with the British. Don't forget that. Don't forget that out of the R.S.S. was born the murderer of Mahatma Gandhi, and today you welcome that party in Gujarat. We have Shri Ramlal Parikh here an old associate. He spoke about the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi. But in his State—Shri Manubhai Shah rightly reminded him—some of the members of his party stood on the Jan Sangh ticket and under the Jan Sangh symbol in Rajkot district, in Gandhiji's district. So you make these fine and learned speeches. I am not a learned person. As my hon. friend, Shri Sultan Singh said "I am not a learned person". I am not educated in the sense that the hon. and learned professor is learned. And quite frankly I do not think I have missed anything. If I have had education, it has been in the villages of India, it has been in the prisons of India, it has been where Fascism was being fought in countries far-off from India.

Emergency was declared not because we wanted to declare emergency. Emergency was declared not because we are afraid of elections, not because we are afraid of abuse or false allegations or threats or intimidation. Had it been so, had we been afraid, we would have declared emergency a long time ago. Please look at the newspapers, the national newspapers and see what they have been saying for the last two years, what kind of falsehood, what kind of misinterpretation, was found in the papers. And it passed under the name of freedom of the Press. People who never went to villages were writing about what we should do for rural welfare.

People have been blaming me all the time for ignoring the village. I had an American correspondent just about a fortnight ago. He said "Oh ! I have gone round the city here and they say you are very anti-city. You are only concerned about the rural people". I said : "Only the other day, your papers and our papers were blaming me for ignoring the rural people. If I am dealing with them, atleast you should be pleased to that extent."

Emergency had to be declared because of acts of sabotage, because there was a very deliberate, conscious, declared effort to paralyse the Central Government. These words are not my words. They have been used by the leaders of movement. As somebody quoted, the words that the fight should be on the streets, were not my words. Nor was that our intention. It was the motley crowd which had got together, which raised this slogan that the fight would be on the streets. We can fight in this House with words and we can also fight with numbers on the street and when I say 'fight' we do not mean throwing stones which Jan Sangh and other members of the Front were doing at every Congress meeting, addressed by Jagjivan Ramji, myself and other Congress leaders during the Gujarat election. What is the use of their telling me : "You prove it". I saw it with my eyes. There were lakhs of people and they would send small boys of this size shouting abusive, vulgar slogans. Who taught them these slogans ? Is it the way to create a nation ? Is it the way to teach them democratic and constitutional and national values ? Little boys of 9 and 10

years of age went about waving black flags and shouting vulgarities and obscenities. I heard them with my own ears. I do not need anybody to come and report to me. I saw how in a huge meeting just 30 or 25 people would get up or only 10 or 15 would rise. In Ahmedabad there were just 10 people who got up. But they threw stones and shoes. They must have collected them beforehand because they were not throwing their own shoes. This was how fair and free elections were being held. You heard Shri Manubhai Shah told how in the Surukwa village—I do not know whether I am pronouncing it correctly—of Borsa taluk of Khera District, the Presiding Officer was caught red-handed by our polling agent who himself admitted that he had already cast, 24 votes in favour of Jan Sangh. He had 24 more in his hand. He is now behind the bars. These are facts. Just by saying that everything was calm and peaceful in the country and everything was going democratically, you do not change facts. The fact remains that every single visitor from abroad, whether from a capitalist country or a socialist country or from the Asian countries, has said to me : "Mrs. Gandhi, do you think this in democracy ? Do you think if you continue like this, this country can survive ?" Every single one of them has asked me this question I have mentioned either in this House or in the other House, that once an Ambassador had called on me to state : "I come at the request of the Head of our nation. What are you doing to India ? We cannot understand your inaction." I had to hear such remarks. Why ? Because I believed in tolerance. Because I thought that whatever hatred there was and frustration there was in the hearts of the Opposition, they would not cross a certain limit for they would realize that beyond a limit there would be chaos, instability and danger to this country, its unity, its integrity and to its very freedom.

Democracy is a value which we deeply cherish, And it is we who have brought democracy. I have no hesitation in saying that parties like Jan Sangh have had nothing to do with it and if they had, India would not have been a democratic country.

Some hon. Member—I was not there, but I have received his speech—compared me to Hitler and to Mussolini, two very different people, by the way. But perhaps he does not know. Well, I do not know whether he was trying to pay a compliment because now they are all together with the Jan Sangh and we know that the Jan Sangh and the RSS have been great and open admirers of Hitler and Mussolini. Openly they said so. I have myself read their speeches and I have also pointed this out to the Jan Sangh leaders and they have mentioned that that is the kind of government that India needs. So, may be they thought that they were paying me a compliment. But I can do without such compliments or any complaints from such quarter.

What does totalitarianism mean ? Would we be sitting here and listening to you if this was a totalitarian Government ? Would you be free at all if this was a totalitarian Government ? I spoke earlier of the Press. All over Europe, India is being blamed because some people are detained, because there are some curbs on the Press. But, have they had anything to say about the murders in Bangladesh ? No. If you kill your opponents, it is all right. But, if you detain them, then you are a dictator. May be that is what you would have preferred because, then, the question would be finished and nobody could raise it any more.

I request you : Get hold of old European newspapers and see how many of them, excepting for brief news reports, have commented on those murders as they have done and as, they continue to do day after day about India's emergency. Therefore, as my hon. friend here has pointed out, it is time that the Opposition took a look at these with whom they are marching in step. Are these the people who have stood for India's strength? Are these the people who have stood for India's unity ? Are these the people who have stood for India's progress ? Why are they praising the Opposition today ? Why are they so concerned about you today ? They are not concerned about the people who have been killed or the people who have been democratically elected in other countries. They are not bothered about those people being killed. For them it was a good thing and they welcome it. But you are prepared to march step in step with them. Well, you choose your company; it is your affair. But don't talk to us about democracy because it has nothing whetsoever to do with democracy. If we have placed curbs today, it is because democracy was in danger and it is because a handful of people, representing a minority of the Indian people, were trying to stop the functioning of the will of the majority of the people. And, this was not something unique to this country. Any time if anybody wants to do something new, any time the people want to change the *status quo,* powerful forces come up; some are obvious and others are not so obvious. But the forces and their strength are tremendous. It is no use saying that you are a few in number. You ask the man whose house was burnt down in Gujarat how long it took and how much money and how much effort and how many labourers were needed to build that house. But how many people were needed to burn it down to the ground. One or two people were enough. What is the use of saying that we are so many and you are only few and what can a few people do ? They did it and they have burnt down the house. We know that countries have been destroyed by handfuls of people. It is not a mass movement that is needed to destroy a country. If you are so sure as you today say, "Go to the elections and see", why didn't you wait yourselves for the elections ? Why did you want to destroy the Government just a few months before the elections ?

So, I am afraid, many many questions await answers. Even if I were to deal with them all, my whole speech would contain only questions to you all. You have not been able to answer any of those questions in all your speeches.

Emergency obviously means some curbs on democracy. Nobody has said that it does not. But it has been said that those curbs were necessary because of the behaviour of a very small number of people in our country and because they were not reluctant to take support from other elements. Many of you may believe in non-violence. I am not saying that you all believe in violence and I am not saying that you all believe in wrong methods. But, because you did not have public support, you were willing to give in to those who did believe in violence.

As today, although the Jan Sangh does not have a majority in the Gujarat Government, the Gujarat Government is virtually in the hands of the Jan Sangh. It does not matter who the Chief Minister or the other Ministers are. This is obvious from their actions and from what is being allowed to be done there.

For a country, democracy is important. But democracy is not an end. Democracy is a tool, is a means, of achieving something. And what are we striving for in our country ? We are striving to take a country of 600 million people from one age to another. We are striving not only to bring a better physical and material life to them, but also to bring something more to them—a new life where they can have the fullest development of their personality.

But this cannot happen without some curbs. You cannot say that a few people will have every luxury, whether that luxury is material luxury in the form of land or of many houses or property or black money or a luxury of doing exactly as they like even if this harms the interests of the many. This is a luxury which cannot be allowed if we want to change this country and bring about a transformation of society. And thus, Emergency had to come. A sense of discipline has grown. But there are two islands where every effort is being made to destroy that discipline, where every encouragement is being given, who want to seek aid from outside to speak against India, who try and think of their interests before the national interests. I have said in this House before, and I have no hesitation in repeating, that I do not mind which party forms the Government, provided that party is going to stand for the unity and integrity of India. But what do we find with the Opposition ? Are they willing to hear the voice of our people, or do they listen to same voice outside ? What do we find ? Many of our intellectuals are much enamoured of the written word or speech that comes from other countries, even though that picture of India and how it should grow, is entirely removed from the realities of the situation here. Until we can strengthen the nation enough, we cannot meet this onslaught. I admit, Sir, that it was my fault. I fully admit that was my weakness that I allowed such a situation to arise. I admit that the sort of tolerance I displayed was a crime against India at that time. And I have to make up for that crime now, and make this country strong.... (*Interruptions*)... and make this democracy strong.... People who threaten to get elected Assemblies dissolved have no right to talk of democracy, and....

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Nobody dismissed the Government there.* I do not know whether you were there....

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The Chief Minister of Kerala said that he could not handle the law and order situation....

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Anyhow, if that was a wrong decision in a very small part of India, can you declare it to be the right thing for the entire country ?** Therefore, you make up your mind about the right or wrong ....(*Interruption*).

We heard of instability. I will talk about it, because I happen to know about it.

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* Replying to Dr. K. Mathew Kurian's intervention, "But who dismissed the Government in Kerala ?"

** Replying to Dr. K. Mathew Kurian's intervention, "No, that is completely wrong. The Kerala Government was dismissed by the Centre."

When there has been instability in one or more States, we have not interfered. We have tolerated the situation. We have had opposition governments and coalition governments in many States. We have not toppled those Governments or made any effort to topple them.

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But when something is sought to be done at the Centre, it is not the same thing. If the Centre is weakened, then what holds the country together ? What keeps aggression away, how are, industry and agriculture dealt with ? What holds the different parts of the country together ? If the Centre is not there, there cannot be a whole country as we see India today. There cannot be any democracy if the Centre is weak. Therefore, when you say that people do not know the meaning of fascism, I would very humbly say that a lot of people do not know what democracy means and they are the loudest in speaking.

The hon. Member from D.M.K. has made a suggestion about having a Round Table. Now was it not the very same Opposition which proclaimed that it would not recognize me as Prime Minister ? It was not prepared to talk with me. It was not prepared to meet me as Prime Minister. Therefore, whether the table is round or square I do not know how any talks can be held unless the Opposition changes its attitude.

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The Opposition front said it.* (*Interruptions*) We have listened to you all patiently. Now you just sit down. If a person who occupies the high position of Deputy Prime Minister can say that he will offer *dharna* in the House, can you have talks ?

Reference has already been made to the tenor of a particular letter which I received. It was not only that. Some of you have come and met us. When we used to meet in Room No. 9, what was the atmosphere ? The atmosphere was not one of talking. It was one of attack. If we called the meeting before the draft outline of the Plan was ready, we were told : "Why have you called us? What is there to discuss when the Government has not made up its mind?" All right, then we draw up the draft outline and called them. We were asked: "Why have you called us ? The draft outline is ready. What can we do now?" We have been through many such episodes. I have always been the first to approach the Opposition and say : Let us talk on such and such issue. But they have found excuses. The latest excuse was when they said that we had approached the parties separately. We should have gone through one particular person. This was not in this House. It was in the other House. But whatever it was, some excuse or the other was found so that there could not be any meaningful discussion. Earlier we did have discussions. We did talk more frankly to leaders of the Opposition than we were prepared to do in this House or in public. We were prepared to take them into confidence. It is they who destroyed that atmosphere. It is they who created a situation in which little by little we agree apart, because we found that they were misinterpreting us. They were saying things outside and they could not keep our confidence. So, we have stretched the hand of friendship to the Opposition for 25 years. But they have not grasped it.

* Replying to Shri S.S. Mariswamy's observations, "I am sorry, Madam, who said that he would not meet you ?"

While I am on the D.M.K., I would like to say something else. Something was said about the Press. Now, in a paper called 'Tamil Murasu', a daily from Madurai, dated October 27, 1975, there is a tirade against Northerners in general and Hindi in particular in language that is bound to incite people and urge them to violence. It is not said that you must be violent. But the language used is such that young people listening might get excited and want to do something. Similarly, in another paper called—I do not know whether I am pronouncing it right—'Kandeepam' of the 20th November, they have written against India with regard to the Chinese intrusion into our territory.

So, this is how some of these people are functioning. Shri Mariswamy was criticising the Censor in Madras as being unfair to the D.M.K. papers. Now I learn that my colleague, Shri Om Mehta, was in Madras recently and he was told that one of the newspapers—and later, I think, the cutting was sent to me—which was supporting another party but is now supporting us has been seized by the Tamil Nadu Government more than seven times. And every time it is seized, there is a loss of many thousands of rupees to the publisher. The publisher and the editor have approached us and represented their case and they have said that the seizure was on some very minor ground and only because the D.M.K. did not like the trend of some of their reports. So, all these.

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While the Opposition shouted abuse and did all types of things, we could not say a word. But if we say, anything, and I am not using any abusive word, I am not saying anything against them they are so thin-skinned, they cannot bear it. What is this if not a guilty conscience ? ...

Now, I want to say a word about my hon. friend, Shri Ramlal Parikh. It was obvious from his speech—I think he was trying to be very sincere—and he himself admitted that he had no knowledge of this House. Therefore, he did not know what sort of things were happening here before the Emergency was declared—the noise, the shouting, the threat, the intimidation was not occasional. It was a constant feature, a daily feature whether in debate or the Question Hour or on some other occasion. He spoke of reason and rationalism. But I am afraid that we saw little of it in the last two years in this House or the other House. He spoke alsc about rumour-mongering. I have said before and now I should like to repeat it. It is a major part of the Opposition strategy to spread rumours. They have been doing it earlier, long before there was any emergency. They have done it through the Press. They have done it through whispering campaigns, all kinds of nonsense about me, about my family, about the Congress and about other individuals. And this is how, they created that atmosphere of hate, of calumny, of falsehood which led to the assassination of our colleague, Shri Lalit Narain Mishra. And even after that tragedy, although they expressed their sorrow, nothing was done to change that atmosphere so that such an incident would not happen again. On the contrary, some were heard to say, "Well, it should happen to more people so that Congress learns a lesson." Shri Ramlal Parikh thought that the Janta Front is an alternative to the Congress. I do not know whether this was his way of being funny—I can only see it as a joke—because if you say that a motley crowd, which does not agree on any policy, either on foreign policy or economic policy or social policy, can

give an alternative Government, where will the country go? It is all right if it is a small place or a small problem when you don't have to do anything positive or take any real decisions or face up to other countries. But once the moment comes when you have to take a stand, what stand will they take? They will take the Jana Sangh stand. And as I said, the Jan Sangh is no believer in democracy. He spoke of 'no disturbances'. Has he denied that ten Christian houses were burnt down after the Assembly elections because when they were asked, "Whom did you vote?", they said that they voted for the Congress? Is this their idea of safeguarding minority rights ? It's not enough to have a Minority Commission or a Committee. You have to have that feeling in your hearts. And I am afraid the Jan Sangh and the R.S.S. certainly do not have it. You speak of democracy. I have taken long time, but with your permission, Mr. Deputy Chairman, I must spend some time on this issue.

Those of you who are in the Congress, do you remember anything about the history of the Congress; how is it that years ago people kept on leaving the Congress in State after State; how was the Bangla Congress formed in Bengal and how were other groups formed and why did they leave the Congress? They left because within the Congress there was no room for them. Not because they openly criticised or went against the party. No, nothing as much as that. They were forced to leave because there was a suspicion that these people were not with the local boss of that time. That is how, in State after State, there was a division. The split that took place in Bangalore was not the first time that Congress was split. This had happened many times and for the same reason that the party boss could not bear people who were even a little bit different or who did not echo the party boss. This is why the Congress kept on splitting. Those are the people who are teaching us now how to behave in our own party and how to deal with our party members. Some of our members have gone out of their way to align themselves with the thinking of the Opposition parties, with the thinking of the so-called Janta Morcha. It does not need much study to see what has been happening when they think that somebody is with me the attack is on that person. But when the same person is against me he becomes perfectly good and honourable and independent-minded.

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Not only Chimanbhai, I am talking of people who are with us.*

They also quoted Professor Laski who was not my professor so much as one of my guardians when I was a student in England and mentioned doubt. It is all right to encourage doubt as an intellectual pastime but when a country or house is on fire, is that the moment to sit and doubt about it or is it the moment to take some water and put off the fire? At a time when our country was facing the biggest crisis of its life, and not only in our country, it was a moment of crisis for the whole world. It was a moment when the entire world was in the grip of the biggest financial crisis that the world has known, when there was inflation in every country. The consequences were very severe for a poor country like India specially coming after a war, the whole traumatic experience of Bangladesh, its refugees,

* Responding to a Member's remark, "Just like Chimanbhai".

the prisoners of war and war itself, followed by two years of severe draught. Was that the moment to sit and doubt and think about it as to what to do or was it the moment to save the lives of the people? None of these matters seemed to concern you. It may be a pleasant pastime to sit and think and talk and discuss these things with newspaper people or among yourselves. But, we have the responsibility. When there was drought we could not sit and think what to do. There was only one thought how do we prevent people from dying of starvation? How do we reach grain to them? And, we did reach it to them. When there was war, there was only one thought, how to win that war and we did win that war. At every stage when there was a crisis we have had only one thought and that was how to face that crisis and we have faced it with boldness. May be, we have made mistakes but I do not think anybody could entirely prevent mistakes when faced with crisis of such vast proportions.

Some hon. Members has said here that Jayaprakashji was released because we were worried about his health. Well, it is true we did wish him good health and we did wish him get the medical treatment which he considers best. But it is wholly wrong and baseless to say that his illness began while he was in detention. We are all aware of his long medical history and of the treatment he had to undergo in Vellore and in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, I think this was answered in a question either in this House or in the other House. The best medical attention was given to him and to whoever else is in need of it. It is quite untrue to say that we want anybody to be ill-treated or harassed.

But it is true that some complaints have been made and whenever a complaint has come to me, I have had it investigated. I have personally written to the Chief Ministers, to Delhi Administration, to everybody concerned, to see that any such harassment is removed. But most of the complaints were found to be untrue. Unfortunately we do have insensitive and unimaginative people and so sometimes things happen which, if we could have prevented, we would have prevented. And when we learn about them we try to take whatever remedial action is possible. But many of these things are not happening merely because of the emergency. If there are some policemen who are misbehaving in some remote places, well, it also happened before the emergency. I am not saying this is a good thing. It is something that has to be changed and we are trying to change it, but it is not true to say that this is a sudden development because of the emergency. It may be that some people in the bureaucracy, in the police or otherwise are trying to settle old personal scores. Some may even be trying to give a bad name to the Government. That is why I have specially asked the Chief Ministers to exercise vigilance and to look into these matters themselves and not leave them to any junior official or even a senior official. But if the public has any knowledge of any such happening, they should bring it to our notice and it will certainly be looked into.

There was a great deal of talk about concessions to monopolists. What is the situation? No favours have been shown. Whatever we have done is in order to stimulate production. The anti-inflation measures were taken somewhat like antibiotics, designed to cure economic illness, but by themselves they do not lead to higher production. Other steps have to be taken. I do not deny that over all these years since Independence, many people who should not have become richer have become richer. In the beginning. I suppose, we

had no other way out because in order to manufacture articles in our own country, we had to depend largely on those who had the know-how, those who had the equipment and those who had most of the resources. But I know that this had created an imbalance. Now we are trying to redress the imbalance. But our system being what it is, we can only do it in a manner which will not cause complete disruption because that also hits the workers indirectly. If a factory shuts down it creates unemployment and it creates other types of problems. So, all the time while we want to ensure that the commanding heights of the economy come into the State sector, we do have a mixed economy and I personally think that if it works well that is the best system for India and, if it is not working well, then the fault is ours as well as of the others, and we must try to remove whatever difficulties there are.

We know that sometimes, just as when we are tolerant towards the Opposition they took undue advantage of it, the same thing happens with the industrialists also. When we think we are helping them out in the national interest to increase production, there have been cases when they have taken advantage of us. We must try to prevent such things happening. But I should like to assure this House that my fullest sympathy is with the workers. They are a class. They are a class which is important to our economic progress. But they are not a class apart from the rest of India. They are a part of this country and what happens to other people will also happen to them.

Higher payments were not backed up by greater production and we found that this was generating more inflation and at one stage of inflation it hit the workers as much as it hit other people. A mere eight per cent bonus does not help them to meet the increase in the prices of other articles which they need. In principle, I personally feel it is unjustifiable to expect bonus when a company is losing. There is no other country, and I include the socialist countries, where this is done. I think the week we declared eight per cent bonus, I happened to go to Ranchi, where a foreign delegation from a socialist country was on a visit. They asked me, "How can you do this? Will you be able to survive with this?"

You must look after production first and then only can you think of benefits. So, I know that our workers are not paid as much as in some of the other countries but it is a process towards which we can work. Giving higher bonus now is not going to help us to reach that position quicker. Some of our leftist friends are painting a fanciful picture of the situation and I am afraid they are trying to instigate our workers. I would like to congratulate the workers on the tremendous patriotism which they have shown. People who have visited factories tell me that the workers are full of confidence and are cooperating with all their strength and enthusiasm in increasing industrial production.

Some people express concern that agricultural prices are falling. But it is one of our national objectives that we should bring down all prices and food prices as well as industrial prices have fallen. Only fuel prices have gone up and you know that is for reasons which are entirely beyond our control. Government has reduced fertilizer prices by subsidizing fertilizer and in providing credit to help our farmers. We also have several programmes to help marginal and small farmers. Many mill-owners have not been behaving and the whole matter of textiles is not in a happy situation. The Ministry and all the Ministries concerned are taking a close look at it. This must be given topmost government priority.

Now just a word about the Constitution. Have hon. Members on both sides of the House forgotten that just a little while before the emergency, what was one of the demands of the Opposition? It was to change the Constitution. It was their slogan. I know that it was said here, either in this House or in the other House or in both Houses, that it was essential to change the Constitution, to change the educational system and the electoral system. So, it is astonishing to hear that those who, such a short while ago were demanding the overhaul of our entire political system, have now become such staunch champions of the *status quo*. There can be no *status quo*. Changes are constantly taking place in the world, in our country and our society and we have to keep pace with them. Changes are needed in order that the people's hopes are realised, and if changes are needed they will be made. Our concern is more for the people's rights than for what the Opposition says or for what other countries say. Personal rights are sacred but not more sacred than the nation's right to exist and to prosper.

Today we are functioning within the framework of the Constitution. If any changes are made they will be made after due deliberations and the widest possible consultation, not to lessen democracy but to make it more purposeful, more meaningful for all sections of the people. Just a little while before one of my colleagues sitting behind me, showed me a British periodical. The article has nothing to do with our situation, but it just shows how change is resisted everywhere. This particular article happens to be about the rights of women. This editorial states that "people today who view the removal of the legal bias operating against women"—this is not here, this is in Britain—as an unwarranted interférence with individual liberty, are the lineal descendants of those who in the last century saw the State's acceptance of the right of all children to be educated as the greatest infringement on the freedom of parental choice.

The battle was eventually won by the collective weight of public opinion. Such is the battle which every change has to face, and will continue to face.

It is obvious that the opposition movement in India was not merely getting publicity, but was actually built up by our Press; and it is because we denied the Opposition the benefit of this, their special type of publicity, that the emergency has succeeded. In a battle the antagonists lines of supply have to be cut off, and this is what censorship has done. It is true that some Censors have acted with a complete lack of imagination. I regret to say. But the reason is not difficult to understand. It is because we have no experience in this sort of thing. Many countries which claim to have a free press have many subtle methods of ensuring that Press does not get too much out of line, out of hand. We being very new and not being too subtle in such matters have not been able to manage it so well. But I am sure that hon. Members will agree with me that the type of character assassination and the spreading of quite baseless and total lies is not part of the freedom of the Press. Nobody raised any voice when this whole campaign was being waged, neither the bigger newspapers themselves, nor Members of the Opposition. And unless the Opposition is willing to take the responsibility for democracy, things cannot proceed smoothly. The Government has a responsibility to see that the Opposition is enabled to function, but the Opposition has an equal responsibility to see that governmental and national work is not obstructed and that trends are not set in motion which can destroy the nation's unity and strength. I do not

want to say anything about foreign critics. As I have said, to them China today is the world's greatest democracy! If they want to have it that way, let them ! A special correspondent who visited India very recently announced later that our food production had fallen tremendously in this year, when it is one of the biggest ever. So I think we need not bother too much about foreign criticism. Perhaps some of you have heard the story that appeared—I heard it in Chandigrah—in a foreign newspaper—that a particular country admitted that its intelligence service functioned mostly through the Press and correspondents. Thus we see what is happening in the world, and how we must be alive to the situation.

I need not take more of your time, but just 5 minutes to tell you something about what is happening in Delhi. The Delhi Development Authority has told me that they have developed 20,000 plots for low and middle income groups–8,000 have already been allotted and the rest are being allotted. They think that by March all will be allotted, providing accommodation for 40,000 families or about two lakhs of people. Twenty-five per cent of these have been reserved for the scheduled castes and tribes. In addition, many other houses are also being built. They have said that the Delhi Development Authority itself will construct about one lakh houses under its public housing programme for allotment to poor people, low income and middle income people. It will provide accommodation to one lakh families or about 5 lakh individuals. Some people have been removed, but they have all been provided with new places to live in and with alternative employment. Sometimes, there is a little dislocation, but I think this was necessary because now they are getting, or will get—most of them have got; others will get—all the basic civic amenities including pucca roads, drains, street lights, public latrines, pure water supply, parks, playgrounds, schools, dispensaries, etc.—and these will be permanently theirs.

In most of the new resettlement colonies libraries and adult literacy centres and community TV centres have also been set up. All squatter families which have been shifted from their old and disorganised slums where the conditions of living were extremely unhealthy, are being resettled in these new colonies. There are lists of where they have gone, and so on. This is not really 'Operation Demolition' but 'Operation Resettlement' through which the following advantages have accrued to these people.

These families have now become regular allottees of the DDA, instead of being squatters. They now live in a much better environment. Various development projects which were held up because of non-availability of land due to haphazard squatting are now being executed, and a number of new overbridges, roads, schools, shopping centres, housing estates and residential colonies are being fast constructed and developed. Similarly, the congestion in the heart of the city has now also been cleared. Of course, when people have to move, it does cause some hardship. But if you are going to give them a better future, then that temporary hardship has to be borne. And there is no doubt that as a result, especially the Jama Masjid area and so on have become much cleaner and much better looking. The people who were squatting on the steps of the Jama Masjid or on the public land around are now resettled in the new market in Urdu Bazar and Mayapuri. Loha Mandi which was in Motia Khan, has been relocated in the newly developed Naraina Warehousing area and so on. It is a long list. But the point is that everyone of them has been given a

place and has been given employment. If you know of any case where they still have hardship we will certainly look into that.

I have taken a lot of time of the House. Sir, I want only to say that we are here not to further our interests. While every political party is interested in elections, we are not concerned merely with winning or losing elections. It is my information from almost every State that if we hold elections now, we would undoubtedly win. But that is not the point. The point is not whether we win or not; the point is whether in disturbing the emergency just now we will have greater unity and strengthen the country or whether all the old disruptive forces will be let loose and create the sort of atmosphere in which the students were not learning, the teachers were not teaching, the workers were not working and the factories were not producing. In that way a poor country will only become poorer and before long, the whole fabric of society would fall apart. Perhaps, this is what some people opposite and some people outside might desire. But we are here for a different purpose; we are here to further the national interest, to carry the country and the people to higher achievements and greater strength.

Thank you, Sir.

Twenty–Point Programme*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, as usual there has been a long debate on the President's Address. But, for the first time, I felt that the speeches tried to argue rather than abuse. Even so many Members were not able to get away from their old narrowness of thinking and some arguments, if I may say so, were rather self-destructive.

Obviously, the President's speech cannot be all-embracing and cover all the points which are of interest to us or to the nation. He spoke specifically of the Twenty-Point Programme and that subject also found mention in most of the speeches in the discussion. An hon. Member opposite, Shri Sezhiyan, referring to the twenty-point economic programme asked rather derisively, 'what happened to the Fifth Five Year Plan?' Now, the twenty-point economic programme is not in lieu of the Fifth Five Year Plan nor does it in any way conflict with the basic objectives and goals of the Fifth Five Year Plan.

What is the philosophy of the programme? My hon. friend, Shri V.K.R.V. Rao, put it in perspective. The programme has to be looked at as a whole. First, it deals with immediate tasks and long-neglected ones. It has introduced new priorities in identifying programmes of special concern to those at the very bottom of the ladder and to impart a new thrust and vigour to their implementation. Urban people–students and house-wives–have not been forgotten. Then, there are long-term programmes such as those for irrigation and power. It also contemplates a multi-pronged drive against economic evils such as blackmoney and smuggling which erode the resource base of our Plan. If implemented in right earnest and with a due sense of urgency and mission on the part of all the agencies concerned, the programme will make a quick and perceptible impact on the lives of our people. It will rouse public enthusiasm and secure a greater sense of commitment of the people to the goals of our Plan. Thus, it will lay the foundations for a speedier advance in the years to come.

The important thing to remember is that at a moment of raging inflation, we have taken up a major developmental programme which does not increase inflation but contains it. I do not think that this can be called a small achievement. It is an ideal expressing itself in real and practical terms. Needs and justice have been sought to be met.

The hon. Members also referred to the delay in the finalisation of the Fifth Plan. It is a canard to say that we have given up the Plan. The basic strategy and objectives of the

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *L.S. Deb*, 9 January, 1976, cc. 136-56.

Fifth Plan remain valid as I have said on previous occasions in the House. They are economic self-reliance, the development of domestic resources of energy and the removal of constraints of production such as shortages of power and transport. In fact, these objectives of the Plan have now acquired heightened significance in the light of developments on the international economic scene in the last two years. Unfortunately, the hon. Member opposite and his party came to power by exciting the people on a narrow provincial basis. But, we in this House, cannot ignore the wider aspect. Economic upheavals have thrown the economies of most developed countries into disarray. Countries which have until recently maintained a rate of growth of 10 to 15 per cent. per annum have had to lower their sights are now faced either with a negative or a negligible rate of growth. Countries which used to pride themselves on their record of price stability have become victims of double digit inflation. Was it possible for us to completely insulate our economy against the blizzard blowing across the international economic scene? If there is delay in the finalisation of the Fifth Five Year Plan, it is because, we would like the international economic situation to stabilise a little so as to enable us to plan with a greater degree of certainty and assurance. It is wrong to think that the Annual Plans are *ad-hoc* exercises. Annual plans are formulated within the framework of the Five Year Plan and seek to further the objectives of the Plan. We have tamed the inflationary forces that threatened to wreck our economy. Prices today are some 7 per cent lower than this time last year. This is an achievement of which we can be legitimately proud.

Our success in the anti-inflationary campaign has given us a new sense of confidence and has improved the outlook for the Plan. In 1975-76, we provided for an increase of nearly 25 per cent in plan outlays. We are aiming at a further substantial increase in the outlays for the next year. The House should remember that the world situation today is very different from what it was when we began planning.

State plans which are largely concerned with irrigation, power, agriculture and social services are somewhat less vulnerable to the destabilisation pressures generated by turmoil in international economics. Even so, what is the record of the Tamil Nadu Government in the implementation of its State Plan. Now, Central assistance, whether it is high or low, is being released in accordance with certain principles. Some States in the south such as Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka and in the north States like Punjab and Haryana and even a relatively backward State like Madhya Pradesh, have managed to fulfil the Plan outlays which in *per capita* terms are far higher than that of the Tamil Nadu Government. I should like to remind the hon. Member and his Party that during the days of the Congress Government under the leadership of Shri Kamaraj, Tamil Nadu used to be near the top in terms of *per capita* plan outlays. Today it is somewhere near the bottom. This is the plight to which this State has been reduced during the last 6 years. In the long run, the poor performance of the State in certain crucial sectors will adversely affect the prospects of the talented people of the State. It may fit in with the political strategy of the Party to make out an impressive catalogue of their minor achievements for temporary political gains. But I am deeply worried about the damage caused to the growth potential of an important State in our country or indeed of the Indian sub-continent, for in their public pronouncements, the DMK Government seems unable to forget their separatist philosophy.

I would not have referred to the poor record of the Tamil Nadu Government on the economic front but for their attempts to mislead the public into believing that the State itself is doing everything it can to further the economic progress of its people, while the Centre is standing in the way. If the State claims to have implemented the twenty-point programme already, it is welcome to nurse this delusion. But for me, the specifics in the twenty-point programme and the spirit animating it are so important that no one who has the welfare of the people at heart can rest content with what has been already attempted or achieved.

There must be a continuous search for programmes benefiting the poor and the weak and a constant endeavour to improve on the quality of implementation of such programmes. I would, therefore, ask the hon. Member and his party not to lay that flattering function to their soul, as Shakespeare said, that they have already done everything that needs to be done to implement the programme and therefore can relax into complacency. It is not those clothed in brief authority but the common people of the State who will suffer the consequences of this grand delusion.

I should like to say a few words about economic achievements under the twenty-point programme in these last six months. Consumer prices for the agricultural labourer are now 8.3 per cent lower; 27 lakh tonnes of kharif cereals have been procured against 14 lakh tonnes last year; 53 lakh bogus cards have been eliminated; public sector production in these six months is 31.5 per cent higher than last year. Industrial production gains are as follows: steel is 15.9 per cent, power generation 12 per cent, coal 12 per cent, fertiliser 43 per cent, cement 11.8 per cent, crude oil 10 per cent, 60 lakhs house sites have been distributed. The programme for the removal of bonded labour is well known as also the establishment of rural banks. Ultimately there will be fifty banks, each with 100 branches. Irrigation is being expanded and the Godavary accord is a welcome new and significant step. Handlooms have been given a loan of nearly Rs. 5 crores. Urban property evaluation programmes and the confiscation of smugglers' properties are other items. Workers' participation has already been effected in about 75 per cent of our public undertakings and we hope to expedite the programme in the remaining months. In income-tax 7.3 lakhs of tax-payers are now off the tax range. In the apprenticeship scheme, 1.17 lakhs of seats have already been filled up and work is progressing.

One hon. Member opposite asked: why are people not being tried if they are guilty of treason? We have–I can at least speak for myself–never used this word or questioned their patriotism. The danger is not of individual acts but of the collective challenge which was being exploited by elements within and outside the country. Their political challenge has been politically met and the unconstitutional agitation has been constitutionally repulsed. The Opposition cannot any longer hope to divide the Congress or to play one against the other, nor will the sowing of rumours help them.

It would be ridiculous for any person to claim infallibility. I have never done so. I have always considered myself a humble servant of the country. What I have said is that my assessment of trends in India and the world have so far proved correct as against the assessments made by most opposition leaders who usually echo the assessment of those

outside our country. This is not because of any personal quality but because I have learnt from our great leaders to be close to the voice of the people.

When I first mentioned foreign agencies, I was ridiculed within the country and without. How do we, or any developing country for that matter, prove or dispute the doings of agencies who have had long years of experience in a variety of countries, using all kinds of methods, and different sections of their own and the local population, besides, religious groups, journalists, academicians and so on ? This is not an ordinary, everyday crime that can come under normal law. To take it lightly does not speak highly of anyone's patriotic instincts. Unfortunately the Member who spoke of this matter has become known for his cleverness in creating mischief and misunderstanding. So long as those antics were confined to this House one could look upon them with some amusement but now he has attempted to do the same in State politics with undesirable results.

I listened with great respect to Kumari Maniben. No one says or thinks that the emergency is a perfect solution or that everything is for the best. There are many imperfections. I am conscious of our shortcomings. I know also that we have people among us who may not be fully in tune with our programmes. Yet we are moving ahead. We have not compromised on any policy matter. She mentioned abuses by the bureaucracy; we are also aware of that. But I should like to point out that those abuses have not suddenly begun since the proclamation of the emergency; they have existed before also. It is our task to discover the faults and to rectify them whenever they are pointed out to us or we get any information. I know also that the difficulties in implementation are not going to be removed merely by our wishing so or declaring the emergency. They will remain because powerful classes and powerful forces at all levels are against the implementation of our policy. We do realise this. All we can say is that these forces must be combated with all the strength at our command and this is what we are trying to do. We may have setbacks, but we have moved forward and we intend to continue to do so. If there are any complaints, if anybody knows of cases, I shall be glad to be told of them and I shall certainly follow them up. Kumari Maniben also spoke of people drinking. Now, you know that we are trying to launch a movement against alcoholic drink. But what about that paragon of virtue in this respect– the State of Gujarat? During the Assembly election I heard of liquor being distributed in a tanker. Only the other day we all read of deaths in Surat due to the imbibing of illicit liquor.

Kumari Maniben and her party may not believe in violence and I do not dispute her saying so. But why do they join with those who do? Why do they allow this violence? As hon. Members on our side have mentioned, there were attacks at every Congress meeting held before the Assembly elections. In my meetings, while the attendance was in lakhs, 10, 15 or 25 people would throw stones, or shoes. They would shout abusive and even obscene slogans. I did not once hear any of their leaders objecting or instructing that that should not be done. One of our candidates was sought to be burnt alive and could be rescued only in the nick of time with serious burn injuries. In the recent elections there, there have been three murders of which we definitely know and many cases of violence. I do not want to read from the large number of letters and telegrams which I have received and which have been referred to the Government.

Kumari Maniben spoke of two prisoners. We all know that Shrimati Gayatri Devi and Shrimati Scindia are not political prisoners. They were arrested for something quite different. In fact, the case against Shrimati Gayatri Devi would have been brought, but there isoften a delay in such matters and she was arrested because of information that she might leave the country. I know how strongly Parliament feels when something like this happens and we would be blamed for not preventing it.

Hon. Member, Shri Patel spoke of fair elections. I do not want to go into details. Some of our Members have pointed to what has happened in the Gujarat elections. I shall only mention two cases. One is about the Government official who had put 24 papers in the ballot box for the Janata Front. He admitted doing so when he was caught red-handed and actually had other such marked papers in his hand ready to be put into the ballot box, I believe he is now behind bars. Similarly there was the news which nobody has contradicted that some thousands of Harijans were not allowed to vote. They were surrounded by workers of a particular group. This happened in the recent elections. But before that, after the Assembly election, I think I have referred earlier to this, a colony of Christians was razed to the ground because on being questioned by some students as to for whom they had voted, they replied 'Congress'. Their houses were burnt to the ground. I do not know whether the Government has come to their help now. But for quite some time the Government had not done so. Now, does Shri Patel consider it democratic or constitutional to dissolve a duly elected Assembly by public violence, by street agitations or a threat to fast unto death? We gave into Morarji only to save his life, knowing that it was a wrong thing to do. Not a wrong thing to save his life, but wrong to dissolve the Assembly because of such pressuie and threat. Maniben was perfectly right when she quoted what I had stated about MISA. I did say so, but I would submit that the circumstances which developed later were exceptional and extraordinary. And, when something entirely extraordinary and exceptional takes place, you have to have exceptional measures to deal with it. Who is the best doctor? Is it a panel of doctors, a hotchpotch of people with different views on treatment? One doctor may make a wrong diagnosis, but having a number of doctors, perhaps with different viewpoints–one Ayurvedic, one Unani, one Allopathic, one Homoeopathic, one expert in Tibetan medicine or some other science–are they capable of giving better treatment to the country? Because, this is what it was–a group of heterogeneous elements in which the Jan Sangh was dominating and calling the tune. I don't think that what we have heard in their speeches, what we have witnessed of their actions, can be the right path for this country to retain either its unity to give fairplay to its minorities or to bring about the sort of equality which is absolutely essential not only from the human point of view, but from the point of view of the country's future strength and effectiveness in dealing with problems, pressures, threats and dangers.

Shri Tridib Chaudhuri is a senior and respected member of this House, but I think he would have been more convincing when he spoke against democracy and people taking advantage of certain situations had he raised his voice all these years, when so much hatred and falsehood were being spread. A virulent campaign was mounted with tremendous pressure. What shouting there was! Again and again we are asked, what could a few people of the Opposition do when Congress has a massive majority? But they had made it difficult

for any Member on this side to function, to reply even in a soft voice. Later, I must admit our Members also took to shouting and it was not possible for me to stop them. Their standard reply was: when the Opposition cannot be controlled, how can you tell only us to be quiet? I had no answer to that. So, this pressure was mounting. As I pointed out the other day, it takes a long time to construct, whether it is a building, whether it is a dam or a project, it takes a long time, it takes a great deal of money and resources and involves many people. But to destroy, what is needed? One person can throw a bomb. One person can set fire. So, this argument about relative members is irrelevant and un-convincing. All over the world, where the forces of reaction have been able to establish themselves, they have not been in the majority. It is a few who have been able, through noise, and support from outside, by creating a particular atmosphere to suppress the voice of the people. They have been able through rumour-mongering and whisper campaigns to create an atmosphere where the ordinary person is thoroughly confused and does not know what is happening. While he attempts to sort out his thoughts and to find the truth of the situation those other take advantage and establish themselves. This has happened time and again in different countries and different parts of the world. Did Shri Tridib Chaudhuri pause to wonder whether there was any truth in the wild allegations which were being bandied about and hurled across at us day in, day out ?

I see in front of me the hon. Member, Shri Viswanathan. A short while before I came into the House I heard that after his speech in the House yesterday, some members of a political party–perhaps you can guess which one it is; assaulted him in the lobby. (*Interruptions*). I am not yielding. (*Interruptions*).

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I said: I was told, I was not a witness to the incident and, therefore, I do not wish to argue about it. The word used was 'assaulted'. (*Interruptions*). Any Member who wishes to do so, can go to the hon. Speaker and speak to him later on. Threats are given quite publicly. Cuttings of what is said and written against many people including myself have been sent to me from Tamil Nadu. I am used to this and we have not complained. But when the falsehoods and threats created an atmosphere which finally led to murder most foul, even then most of the Opposition were content merely to say that this should not have been done. They did nothing to change the atmosphere of hatred which always breeds violence.

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Shri Indrajit Gupta commented that there was no point in speaking if it would not be fully reported. I do not know whether the speech has been fully reported or not because I do not read these things in the newspapers. In Parliament do we speak for the benefit of hon. Members or do we speak for the public outside?

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It is an odd way of looking at it.* We speak here to put our point of view before Parliament.

Points were also made about monopolists and monopoly. It is true that we are thinking of changes in the industrial licensing policy, some have been made and these are precisely in order to encourage small and medium entrepreneurs and to prevent a few people from taking advantage even of the controls for their own businesses. Some controls are necessary. We do not think that everybody should be left free to do exactly as he likes in industry, in grabbing economic power. But we must guard against controls becoming self-defeating. Controls in themselves are not synonymous with socialism. We should not confuse the means for the ends. If we find that a particular policy is not yielding the results that we had hoped from it, we must modify it. And when hon. Members opposite spoke about our association with the monopolists I wondered if they considered the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra Party more radical just as China and Chile today are considered more democratic by some?

Then comes the question of bonus. This is a controversial question. It is true, that workers in India may not get the sort of wages that are paid in other countries. But I do not know whether the wages of all industrial workers here are very much lower than in every country in the world. When a concern is losing how can it possibly get on its feet, if it is forced to pay a particular amount in bonus? My attention was drawn to this aspect the week after our decision on the 8 per cent bonus. I happened to go to one of our big public sector undertakings, where I met a delegation from one of the socialist countries; and the first thing they told me that they were astonished at this decision of ours. They could not see how we could hope to build up our industry, how we could put our public sector on a sound basis, if we continued with this policy. It is not only a question of industry. It is also a question of the workers themselves. An increase in payment leads to greater inflation and an increase in the prices of other goods. They are not merely industrial workers; they are also a part of this country; they have to meet the needs of their families–then that increase in bonus does not help them at all. That is why we took the decision. I was a party to the earlier decision. I am not blaming anybody. If I find any decision is wrong, then it is our duty–even if we displease people–to set that wrong right. But we sincerely hope that as our industrial base strengthens and as our economy is on a sounder basis, it will be possible for us to do more for our workers.

Similarly, I share the concern or all hon. Members of both sides of the House at the lay-offs and the retrenchment and so on which have been taking place. The Minister, my colleague, announced that a legislation would be brought soon. I am told that the apex body which was set up, has been able to solve some questions. (*Interruptions*).

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* Replying to Shri Indrajit Gupta's remark, "Both. We are sent here by the people".

Then we must look at it again and see that the employers are not helped in this manner and that the workers do not suffer.* There are no two opinions in the matter.

I should like to take this opportunity of expressing my congratulations to industrial workers. They have shown great discipline and enthusiasm. The figures show improved working in almost all sectors of industry. Recently when I was in Visakhapatnam I found that quantum of work done by the dock workers in the last few months had increased considerably. So, I would like to express my gratitude to them, and also to the armed forces which have shown courage and determination in war and disciplined work in peace. They are to be congratulated on their steadfastness.

Much has been said about the Press. I do not want to dilate on that matter. I have spoken on many occasions. I am not against the Press, Indian or foreign. What I am against is falsehood and hypocrisy. What has been the record of some newspapers ? If I can take the House back, long years ago when I was a girl, it was more important for a pressman to secure a scoop and to get it printed in his paper than to save the life of the Lindbergh baby. We find this attitude increasing not only with regard to Indian affairs, but affairs anywhere, that more and more people want to go for something that is sensational, something that will hit the headlines, rather than constructive, solid work. It does not perhaps matter in an advanced and affluent society, but it does matter in a country which is trying to build itself up in the face of tremendous odds and difficulties. It does matter if you are spreading what I was told by a British Lord who visited us, "alarm and despondency", against which there was a law in England during or immediately after the last World War. It is a serious matter for any country which confronted with special difficulties, as our country undoubtedly was. We all know the attitude taken by the foreign press towards events in India, towards drought, the refugee situation, the Bangladesh war or any other internal or international problem.

Speaking of the emergency some hon. Member alleged that we have opened the flood-gates which could be used by despotic persons. Was it the same thing said about our atomic experiment ? Does anybody seriously believe that those who do not believe in democracy, those who do believe in the use of atomic power for military purposes, were waiting for India or the Congress to do anything ? Would they and have they not, in their countries, taken whatever steps they wanted to take regardless of foreign opinion ? We have tried to take certain steps, which may not be ideal, in order to prevent something worse happening to the country, in order to prevent democracy being swept off entirely. Certain curbs have been put, nobody denies that. Nobody says that it is good to do so. At the same time, as many Members mentioned there has to be a feeling of responsibility, some thought of duties along with rights. Unfortunately, we were going further and further away from such a concept, and this had to be reinstated.

The Foreign Minister spoke at length on the international situation. I need not go over the same ground. As our strength increases there is an effort to decry India. This is no

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* Replying to Shri S.M. Banerjee's observations, "The employers do not care for the apex body. They care two hoots for the recommendations of the apex body".

time for us to slacken our vigilance. We have believed and we do believe in co-existence. What does that mean ? It means that we agree to get along with countries whose systems or methods we may not entirely approve of.

There are countries with whose policies we do not agree. But no country can be pushed off this world on to another planet. Unfortunately there is a new theory (I am not quite sure how to pronounce it) the 'Triage Doctrine' which absolves affluent countries from the bother of helping very poor countries, which are to be left to fend for themselves. Where will they go ? Can they be moved from their geographical position on earth ? If poverty increases or disease spreads, can other countries be immune ? These are far deeper questions. I am not going into them here.

I should like to emphasize our desire and genuine and persistent effort for friendship and co-operation with all countries, near and far. We may not always agree with America, but we know that it is dynamic nation; it has attracted talent from all over the world including India; the people are dynamic and are constantly giving birth to new and stimulating ideas on education, the arts, science and technology. I should like to give them my congratulations on their bicentennial.

I forgot to mention one point. I think it was hon. Member Shri Manoharan, who referred to Hindi. The question has been debated here many times. I repeat my assurance that there is no desire or attempt to force Hindi on those who do not want it. But we do feel that it could be worth while for all Indians to have at least a working or an understanding knowledge of any one Indian language so that we do not have to converse with one another in English. You and I happen to speak English. Perhaps those on the other side have greater knowledge of it than we have. But, as a whole, those who know English are such a minute minority in the country that it cuts us off from the vast majority of our masses. Therefore, if all over India there is an understanding it need not be a perfect understanding of Hindi– which does not obstruct the development of Bengali, Assamese, Tamil, Telugu or Kannad or any other Indian language, it should be welcomed. We are aware that none of these languages is a dialect; they are all ancient languages with their own history and beautiful old literature. We are doing everything possible to encourage these and help them to grow. But no one language need impinge or tread on the toes of others and certainly we do not want Hindi to do so.

Sometimes a group of people are over-enthusiastic on both sides. The Hindi enthusiast try to spread the use of Hindi and some hon. friends outside are over- enthusiastic in decrying Hindi, saying that only their language should be encouraged.

Yesterday I replied to Shri Patel when he spoke about some draft of Constitutional changes being circulated. A number of people, known and unknown, legal luminaries as well as others, have sent me notes, suggestions, letters, telegrams, all kinds of things, and one or more of these may be in circulation, I do not know. No such document has been circulated by me or by the Government or Congress Party, so far as I know. But I have said that whatever suggestions come should be considered in depth. We do not believe in change for the sake of change. On the other hand if change is necessary, we should not

hesitate to bring it about. But if there is a change, it should be in the direction of justice and fair play to those vast number who are being denied their due.

This change should not be for the sake of any party or personal power. We must be concerned with human life and welfare which are as important as human liberty.

Some hon. Members have spoken about elections. Elections are certainly not being given up. But elections are not the be-all and the end-all of democracy, or of life. We do look beyond. The good of the country, its unity and capacity to defend itself against aggression or oppression, its ability to produce more and distribute production more fairly, all these are aspects which cannot be neglected and we cannot allow a situation to develop where these aspects are jeopardised merely for the sake of an election or proving to the world how democratic we are.

There was also mention of a round-table dialogue. I spoke of this yesterday. My attitude has never been one of rigidity. In one of the papers I saw a headline suggesting that "I rule out dialogue" I am not in the habit of categorically ruling out any proposition except when it concerns injustice or matters which go against the interest of our people or the strength of our country. On those matters I must say, I am and always will remain firm. But on questions of dialogue or talking with the Opposition my attitude has not been inflexible. On the contrary, I have always tried to find ways of conciliation. I am afraid, this effort of mine has led us into trouble. When we have gone out of our way to be tolerant and have made friendly gestures, the Opposition has taken it for a show of weakness and they have chosen that moment to threaten and exert greater pressure to exact some more concession out of us. Can you shake hands with one hand ? It needs two hands. We have always shown our willingness. It is for the Opposition to give up the path of obstruction and violence and to create conditions for a dialogue.

What is the objection ? For the poor people of the country, the goal is to have more; for our workers, it is to have better conditions; for our farmers, to have strength to face the vagaries of weather; for our city people, better amenities, better transport and so on. What of us who are supposed to represent all sections of the people? Can the end be any one or several of these things ? Is our task not of a far greater magnitude, of vaster proportions? I spoke earlier of duties. This is the time when we must consider what are our duties and obligations, not only to Parliament but to the country as a whole. Is it not our duty to see that peaceful conditions exist ? While it is the duty of the Government and the ruling party to allow freedom of expression and association and to allow the legitimate functioning of the Opposition, it is equally the duty of the Opposition to allow the legitimate functioning of the Government. But this functioning of the Government and of some Assemblies was being hampered long before these Ordinances came into force. Along with rights we have to think equally about our obligations, our responsibilities and our duties.

Democracy cannot be one-sided. It can work only if all sections subscribe to its conditions and are willing to curb their liberty to the extent that it does not tread on the liberty of others. Only then can democracy survive and function. It is our responsibility to restore hope and confidence. This is what we have tried to do and this is what I meant,

when I earlier spoke about the spread of alarm and despondency. I was concerned at the danger to the country and not at threats to a Party or one or more individuals. There was a deliberate effort to spread despair amongst the people, to spread a feeling of hopelessness by proclaiming that nothing has been done, nothing is being done and nothing can be done. This affected our young people, our farmers and others. Therefore, each group thought that it should try to get what it could for itself. If you believe that the country has no future, how can you work for a future ? You will then say 'let us grab what we can while we may'. It is only when we have hope and confidence for a bright future that we can say 'let me sacrifice now because the future is on the horizon'.

Bharat Mata is bent by the heavy burdens of colonialism, of imperialism of feudalism. She is suffering visibly not only from the ills of poverty, deprivation and disease but also from mental complexes and attitudes bred by superstition and out-dated habits, by chauvinistic thinking, by narrowness–of religion, caste, creed, language or province–by customs which weigh heavily on the poor. It is our duty today to enable Bharat Mata to become young again, to hold herself erect and her head high–and in this, we would certainly like the help and co-operation of all those Members of the Opposition who believe in the tasks we have set ourselves and who feel that a new way of co-operation can be found.

Sir, I commend this motion to the House.

Nation-Building—New Directions*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, before I begin my reply, may I say a word to the hon. Member opposite who raised a question regarding the Republic Day Parade ? I want to inform him that the programme for the Parade, the items and the details were decided long before our Government came in. We did not interfere with it in any way. In fact, I did not know what it was till we saw the Parade. Anyhow, the part of the NCC does not come before the Government. But I agree with him that such details should be looked into. I hope he and all other hon. Members will join me in congratulating our Defence Services on the excellence of the Parade and the Retreat. All our foreign visitors and others were most impressed.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have tried to be present during the debate on the President's Address, and specially during the speeches of the hon. Members of the Opposition; but certain unavoidable engagements have prevented me from listening to them all. For this I am sorry, but I do get the main points put before me day by day.

I mean no disrespect when I say that the debate, from the Opposition side, lacked any heart or conviction. Most of the arguments made were feeble. Many hon. Members are still continuing go flog the dead horse of Emergency. They are still to find their way out of the trauma of the past. 1975 and 1977 now belong to history. We have entered 1980, a new decade which has started with challenges of gigantic proportions, internally in the shape of economic and social problems, and in international affairs, the threat to non-alignment and to our very security. The President's Address was written when the Government was about 4 days' old. Therefore, it is not very realistic of hon. Members to expect that we would, at the time, be able to give details of how we are going to tackle these various problems. It was physically impossible to get any precise view of the state of the nation at that time.

Anyone who tries to belittle the achievements of the Congress rule during these 30 years can do so only by shutting his eyes to reality. In 1947, we were a country newly emerging into Independence after a long period of colonial rule. We had a political structure which was fragmented and an economy which was, in many ways, primitive. Different parts of the country were existing in different countries. hon. Members will perhaps remember–and specially those from Bengal–of one of the last articles written by Gurudev

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *L.S. Deb.*, 30 January, 1980, cc. 136-62.

Tagore. He said : "I know the British will leave India. The question before us is, in what condition will they leave the country". And we are all aware of that condition.

We laboured hard for 30 years to build a nation that was politically viable and economically sound. We achieved a strong political unity in spite of the immensity and diversity of our people. We developed democratic traditions that survived through years of political strife. From a subject state, we grew to a free nation whose voice was listened to with respect in the councils of the world.

The Opposition has chosen to rake up the past. I have preferred to look to the future, but, because they have referred to certain things, they have left no option for me but to deal with some of the issues with which they seem obsessed. Firstly, I would like very briefly to deal with the question of persecution. What did the Janata Party–in the Janata Party, I include both, the Janata and the Lok Dal which is Janata (S)–do after the elections? My party had offered full co-operation in any nation building activity, in any programme for the welfare of the people. In fact, my hon. friend opposite and former colleague will forgive me, one of the reasons for our quarrel was that we felt that he was bending over backward to support the then Ruling Party.

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That was my view, Chavanji. *That is why, I said, we differed. But what was the response of the Janata Party ?

Instead of allowing my party to function as an Opposition, a campaign of repression was unleashed against me, my family and my associates.

There were a series of politically motivated commissions set up. Now how many were there, I think...

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Apart from commissions, there were other enquiry authorities. We are told by the Home Ministry that there were 34 commissions. Tailored evidence was produced before them. The atmosphere in the proceedings, as I know from personal atmosphere reminded one of Medieval Britain when malicious pleasure was derived in harassing the accused and also the days of MaCarthyism in the USA when public hysteria was whipped up and distortion, concoction and intimidation was practised on a large scale through government controlled media. Heads of commissions, judges and others were having meetings with the Prime Minister and the Home Minister. Dozens of cases were started against my son. Officials close to me were harassed and intimidated; and not only they–if they were guilty, well there is some excuse–but their relatives, their old parents, their sisters who had not very close connections with them over the years, all of them were bounded and persecuted. Indiscriminate searches at their premises were made. Large scale sealing of bank lockers, freezing of bank accounts of relatives, impounding of passports, income tax cases of

* Responding to Shri Yeshwantrao Chavan's remark, "Question!"

relatives; officers were subjected to investigation by special courts. Even there was a query; parents were asked to explain about expenditure which was incurred before 1947! I was asked how I got a certain cheque from some university in 1960. Arrests of former Ministers such as Shri Gokhale, Prof. Chattopadhya, Shri Bansi Lal, Shri Malaviya, Shri P.C. Sethi and others, top businessmen were also not spared arrest. I am going through it very briefly. If I went into details, we could tell you some harrowing tales.

During the period from the end of March 1977 to the middle of January 1980, ten CBI officers visited foreign countries in connection with the investigation of eight CBI cases. They visited the United Kindgom, Switzerland (Berne & Geneva), Stockholm, Frankfurt, Bonn, New York, Washington, Paris, Singapore, Bangkok, Tokyo and Osaka. It was said the main purpose of these visits was to obtain evidence against me, my family and my close associates. But you all know what was the outcome. I have no doubt that it gave an opportunity of combining business with pleasure. But apart from this, the attitude! Our ambassadors were told immediately after the government came into power to burn any pictures or any writings by me or my father Jawaharlal Nehru...

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I can understand the hon. Member's embarrassment* . An ambassador himself told me that he got these instructions.

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I do not know who gave the order**. I am only repeating what I was told. I am not interested in who issued those orders. I was told this by an ambassador and I have no reason to disbelieve him. I can also share this information that he is not a member of the Congress Party.

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His reply was that he would not burn them; if he was not allowed to keep them, he said he would shut them up in a cupboard, and he did lock them up in a cupboard.

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This was only in external affairs–the way the pictures were torn, trampled upon. One Air Force officer told me that right in the beginning, he had a picture of my father, me and himself. He was told–I do not know at what level–by somebody who visited the office to remove it. He said : it is entirely a personal matter. I am not keeping it as a political gesture, it is a personal memento. Very soon after he was transferred, whether the transfer was connected with it or not, I do not know, but he felt, in his mind that it was connected. It is not just one case. There are thousands of cases like this, not just one. Every effort

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* Replying to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee who said, "I challenge that statement. It is not true".

** Replying to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee who *inter alia* wanted to know from whom the ambassador had got the instructions; and to Shri Ravindra Varma who *inter alia* said that the order be placed on the Table of the House.

was made to humiliate me in every possible way. Foreign ambassadors have told me. I am not going to reveal their names, Mr. Vajpayee. It is only fair that the House should know. They are respectable people of high position in their countries. They have told me that they were hauled up for visiting me. Many of those who came to see me, came in taxies or walking. So, this was the atmosphere created. Anybody who visited me, if they had anything to do with the Government, whether they were in University or in any department which remotely had some Government help, they were hauled up.

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Well they were called and asked, told whether they wanted government support to continue.*

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Thank you very much indeed. **That is exactly what I am saying. These were carried out by those people whose main slogan was their belief in democracy and in the freedom of the individual. We did not bring emergency through the back door. We brought it openly. We did not arrest anybody from the back door. Everybody knew that these people were being arrested. As I said, if any wrong things were done... (*Interruptions*)

Please keep quiet because I am going to take a long time. I do not mind if you want to sit on. I have plenty to say. The more quietly you listen, the sooner it will be over. I am not going to cut out anything because of your shouting, I am not going to sit down because of your shouting, let this be very clear. (*Interruptions*)

I have heard that some of the films taken when I visited the forward areas were also destroyed by the Information Ministry. So far as I know, the hon. Minister at that time acknowledged that they were lost.

The hand of the R.S.S. was clearly visible in the administration, the manner in which the hon. Member here has spoken about riots and various other incidents that took place, the manner in which the RSS infiltrated into various strategic positions, in education, in administration, in the police force and various other areas.

Was not my expulsion from Parliament, immediately after winning election was an insult to the people of Chikmagalur ? And to the democratic process itself. Was it not bulldozing by the majority ?

We have said that we do not want to be vindictive. But the facts must come out.

An effort was made to distort even the previous history, not to talk of recent history. We know the hon. Members from the Jan Sangh.

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* Responding to Shri Indrajit Gupta's question : "What does hauled up mean ?"

** Replying to Prof. Madhu Dandavate's remark, "You are describing emergency conditions."

I think the gentleman who has been busy trying to prove for some years as to how the Taj Mahal was a Hindu temple belongs to Shri Vajpayee's party*. This may be an extreme case. But there are many things in between which are equally dangerous to the survival of the Indian tradition, which is a tradition of absorbing, of synthesis and of great tolerance, it does not believe in falsehood or in rubbing out something which some do not happen to approve of because it does not suit their picture of India or what they want to do.

Now, the neglect of fundamental development by the Janata Government was matched by equal irresponsibility in the day-to-day management of the affairs of the country–political and economic.

Members, have spoken about the sharp deterioration in the law and order situation and the sense of insecurity, particularly among the weaker sections.

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Specially of women; I have mentioned all this in my speeches outside.

Some have said that they have continued. Of course, they have continued. Can we change it suddenly ? But certainly I think that already there is a slight change.

With regard to communal clashes, during the last three years the minorities have suffered because of the increase in communal incidents. In 1975, there were 962 people injured and 33 killed. In 1976, there were 794 injured and 39 killed. The very next year–1977–the number of people injured goes up to 1,119. In 1978, the number of injured people were 1,853. In 1979, the number of injured was 2,346. The number of dead was 260.

Casteism and caste feeling have been the features of Indian society for centuries. At the beginning of the post-independence period, there seemed to be a lessening of aggressive caste feeling, but with the coming in of democracy, it came up again because people looked to caste support. However as soon as they realised that this support was not enough to balance the hopes of other castes, again we found a lessening of caste dependence. During the Janata and Lok Dal rule, not only did we find caste in our political life and in our public life, but casteism and communalism were injected into our institutions of higher learning. Our civil services and even such innocent-looking programmes like adult education were vitiated. Even in the Lok Sabha elections, the effort was to fight on the basis of casteism and communalism in the vain hope of winning elections by misleading the people. I think this election has proved that our people are much more broad-minded with an overall national outlook than many of our friends opposite would like them to be.

Crime against scheduled castes between 1975 and 1979–the number of cases reported in 1975 was 7,781. I am skipping the middle portion. In 1978, the number was 15,059. In 1979, upto September, the number was 10492. Crime in Delhi went up again from 23,105 in 1976 to almost the same figure in the first half of 1979–21,307. Figures are sometime boring but since the others have quoted some, I think I am going to bore you with them.

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* Responding to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's observation, "We have nothing to do with the Jan Sangh."

The hon. Member, Chaudhuri Charan Singh, said something about foodgrain production. In 1950-51, the production was 52.58 million tonnes. In 1973-74, it went upto 104.67 and in 1975-76 it went up to 121.3. We certainly did import foodgrains because we were determined that our people should not starve.

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Production did go up. *We are not belittling that. But you had excellent rains whereas in the other periods, we had faced serious droughts. You had years of very good rainfall. What is the result this year ? This year, food is not available for the drought-affected area, although when we left a surplus, we were then told that there was enough for 2 consecutive years of drought and there would be no difficulty in the country.

Coming to irrigation, we started off with a mere 22.6 million hectares of utilised irrigation potential in 1951. By 1977-78, there was an increase of 26 million hectares. I have not got the middle figure. But the figure for 1973-74 was 42 million hectares. There was an increase during the Janata rule, but I think hon. Members will realise that this is the result of the investments in the years before 1977 on irrigation projects. May I ask, how many new irrigation projects were put up and would they yield results immediately even if you had begun them up in 1977 ? At least in one place a bridge that was built by us was listed as an achievement of the Janata government because it had not been formally inaugurated during the Congress regime.

About industrial production, we built the sinews of industrial strength through the development of the core sectors of coal, steel and oil and the expansion of the transport infrastructure and induction and generation of a wide range of technologies. The index of industrial production in 1951 was 100. In 1977 it has gone up to 389.2. Similarly, coal production in million tonnes: In 1973-74 it was 81.8, in 1976-77, it was 100.8, in 1979 up to November, it was about 65 million tons. Saleable steel in million tonnes: 4.47 in 1973-74, 7.41 in 1976-77, and the provisional figure for 1977-78 is 5.08. Railways: 1973-74 it was 162.1 million tonnes. Originating net tonne kilometres: 1,09,391.

In 1976-77 it goes up from 162 to 212. In 1977-78 it comes down to 210 and in 1978-79 it comes down to 199. In the first 8 months of 1978, 19 million mandays were lost and in the corresponding period of 1979, about 30 million mandays were lost due to industrial disputes.

Chaudhury Sahib made a statement about India going down from 1966 in the list of countries. I am told that this is because the number of countries has increased and looked at it from that angle, the position in 1976 had considerably improved compared to that in 1973.

Export trade: From 1974-75 to 1976-77, the average annual rate of growth was 26.8 per cent, from 1977-78 to 1979-80, it was 6.2 per cent.

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* Responding to Prof. Madhu Dandavate's remark, "During Janata rule it went up to 126.5 million tonnes."

The Janata party increased our import bill : In 1973-74 imports were Rs. 2,955.4 crores; in 1977-78 they rose to Rs. 6,025 crores. This was partly due to the need to go in for heavy imports of items such as steel, cement, coal and aluminium to meet shortages in domestic production which had been allowed to develop due to inefficient utilisation of existing capacity.

That is how there is a rapid widening of our adverse balance of trade and we are ill-equipped today to pay for the petroleum and other costly imports which we desperately need from abroad.

It is not true that the large buffer stock of foodgrains was built up with imports of food. We did import food when it was necessary, but gradually we had built up stocks to make us self-sufficient in foodgrains, that is how, the Janata Party Government was able to export some soon after coming into power.

In March, 1977, the national buffer stock was 18 million tonnes. This was the result of a massive domestic procurement which itself was a consequence of the steps taken by the Government in my time to make Indian agriculture more productive.

From 1966-67 to the period when my Government laid down office in 1977, the national income at constant prices increased from Rs. 27,298 crores to Rs. 40,534 crores, yielding an annual compound rate of 4.03 per cent. In 1978-79 the growth rate was 4.06 per cent which is similar to the growth of ten years. A long-term growth rate of 4.03 per cent in ten years with fluctuations in agricultural production is much more difficult to achieve than 4.6 per cent in a year of good monsoon.

Export of engineering goods increased from Rs. 356.6 crores in 1974-75 to Rs. 566 crores in 1976-77.

Many Members have expressed their concern over the problems of agriculture. The hon. House knows how very anxious we ourselves are. Choudhury Sahib has been pleased to state in his election speeches that I cannot tell the difference between a cow and a buffalo! Hon. Members can themselves judge the seriousness of such remarks. I am not called upon to be a judge at either cattle shows or buffalo shows, but I was concerned during my years in office to see that our farmers get remunerative prices. Their complaint was that the experts who sit in the Agricultural Prices Commission know nothing about the difficulties at the field level and that our Government always accepted their opinion. Well we went into this in great detail, and we had many discussions with the hon. Members, and on the whole we tried to give farmers a fair deal. But whatever price was agreed to was regarded by us as a support price. But what happened in the last two years ? The peasants did not get a proper price for sugarcane, or for other crops. When I went to the Faridkot constituency–I do not see the hon. Member here–from a distance I thought snow had fallen seeing the piles and piles of white Narma cotton. Nobody was buying it. In U.P. I was told–I have not ascertained this from Government sources–it is what the farmers told me before the election and during the campaign, that they were not able to get the price declared by the Government. It was when most of them had sold their produce at a lower price, almost at distress rates, that the Government came forward and announced the higher price.

What happens ? Those farmers who had already sold their stock could not get that price. So, that money would go....

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The farmers told me that this did not happen before.* Why should they come, specifically to tell me if this was an earlier experience ?

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Regarding many other matters, people have not hesitated to state: "This is our problem, it is a long-existing problem, please look into it", but this time they did not say so and because of their experience with sugarcane, people today are not in a mood to plant sugarcane, and we are threatened with a shortage of sugar in the coming season. This sort of thing has not happened before. Farmers were planting more and more because they were getting a proper price. When you do not get remunerative price, you are bound to feel that since it is not a paying crop why should I depend on it ? This is just what I am saying, Mr. Gupta. What I am trying to put across is, had this happened in the previous years at the same level, those farmers would have been discouraged than also from planting those particular crops. But they were not discouraged, they planted more of sugarcane, more of everything. Now for the first time they are saying that since this is not a paying crop, they will not plant sugarcane. This is the fact.

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We do not want our farmers to suffer. I do admit that these policies have to be planned in a far more long-term perspective. We tend to take decision in a somewhat *ad hoc* manner, dealing with immediate problems. If I go wrong somewhere, I have no hesitation in admitting it. Somehow we were always caught in last moment decisions and this caused some problems. Now we must attempt a long term perspective. My colleague, The Minister for Agriculture, has already dealt with the measures which we propose to take to alleviate the sufferings of our people in the drought affected areas. I should like to mention particularly that we shall arrange for close monitoring of the drought situation and take an active interest in the proper implementation of the food for work programmes. The protection of cattle will also receive greater attention.

Several hon. Members have spoken about unemployment. It is indeed a matter of grave concern and it is at the root of many other problems which arise. Whether it be a law and order problem or even, I would say, the very serious situation in our North Eastern region. We can certainly have short-term measures. But basically, employment can be created when the economic problems are solved and not just by having deadlines. Many hon. Members on this side have spoken about the rolling Plan and how the whole process....

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* Replying to Shri Chandrajeet Yadav's observation, "It has been a regular feature for the last so many years."

All those things will come up later.* I am not in a position to say anything concrete because we have to know what exactly it involves. There is no point in my announcing that I will do something and find later that I cannot do it.

The numbers in India are so vast that many programmes which are most urgent and necessary are beyond our capacity, especially at this moment when the economy is in a bad way. But we will certainly look into the problem in depth and give it our urgent attention.

We have always regarded planning as a tool for economic and social change. During the entire period of the Janata and Lok Dal rule, the Five Year Plan could not be finalised even by the Central Government, let alone having consultations with the States. I am astonished that any Indian should ignore all these achievements in agriculture and industry, which have taken place. As I have said in my speeches, I am not responsible for them, it is the Indian people through their labour and sacrifice, the farmer has increased his production the industrial worker also through his own work. I am not going to belittle their contribution because that is the main thing. But how were they able to do so ? Because we gave them a policy. Because we gave a definite direction. The same is the case with our young scientists and technologists. Today, India has the third largest reservoir of engineering skills in the whole world and one has only to look around us and compare our political and economic situation with those of the countries which have acquired freedom in the postwar period, to judge our record in a proper perspective. Those who try to decry our performance, show an utter lack of national pride and faith in our people.

I have mentioned drought relief. Just today, I had a very large contingent from Madhya Pradesh. Also MPs from Madhya Pradesh, from Rajasthan, from Uttar Pradesh, from Bihar and other States which have been suffering from drought, who came to see me regarding the inadequacy of relief work and the low wages which are being given to them. They have repeatedly complained about the lack of availability of various essential articles and that recovery of loans was being done even when farmers were in such deep distress.

There are two matters which have nothing to do with drought but which I must mention here since my attention was drawn to them by the large crowd that came from Madhya Pradesh; they were also mentioned by MPs from Rajasthan and yesterday my hon. friend and colleague, Shri Kamalapati Tripathi also told me that this was happening in U.P. also. The State Governments in these places have begun a vigorous programme of sterilisation and demolition and they are propagating that "We told you, when the Indira Gandhi Government comes back, sterilisation will be renewed. These are instructions received from the Centre."

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I should like to tell this honourable House that no such instructions have gone from the Centre. This is typical of the manner in which they were previously spreading falsehood and now also they continue to do so.

* Replying to Shri Samar Mukherjee's remark, "What about unemployment relief?"

My hon. friend has raised the question of stoppage of relief work. During the flood situation in Delhi–I forget whether it was 1977 or 1978–when I visited the affected areas, we found that those areas which had voted for our members to the Corporation and the Metropolitan Council, were denied their rations. It was only when we made a big noise that the rations were resumed. I am not going into all thise things. It just shows their attitude.

I am not mentioning the names of all the Members who have spoken. But I should like to express my appreciation of the note of sobriety which Shri Jagjivan Ram brought to the whole debate. He referred to the need for radical changes in the system for the abolition of poverty and the solution of our economic problems. I wish he had spelt out his ideas and told us what radical steps he had in mind consistent with the sort of democracy that we have in India.

Another friend from the Marxist party opposite underlined the need for fundamental changes in the system. He cited the example of China. It is interesting to see how international politics move. During the war in Vietnam when we were supporting the Vietnamese, we were consistently told by the United States and other Western authorities that they were fighting in Vietnam only to protect us from China, that the great threat to India was China and, therefore, it was very wrong of us to support Vietnam since the Chinese were also helping the Vietnamese against U.S.A. We were consistent in our policy towards China. In spite of the fact that we had suffered aggression–at that time not only were there no relations, there was hostility–we continued to support China's entry into the United Nations for the very simple reason that a large nation whose population is 1/6th of the world cannot be left out of any international decision. Whether we like their viewpoint or not, is an entirely different matter. We were not at all opportunistic; we were consistent in our policy.

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I am just telling you the whole story.* (*Interruptions*). I shall come to that aspect.

I wanted to give the whole picture because suddenly, almost overnight, we found that China was said to be a great friend and we had to be protected from the Soviet Union and Vietnam ! It is a little difficult for me, a simple person, to understand such things ! (*Interruptions.*)

I am coming to the economic part.

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With all due respect .....(*Interruptions*). I do not know why the hon. Members opposite should be so sensitive. I have not said a word about his party: I am trying to give the background of a particular situation.

Now let us come to the socialist system. From violent hostility the western world and some friends from the Jan Sangh and others sitting opposite switched over to a feeling of

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* Replying to Shri Samar Mukherjee's remarks, "I spoke about the economic system".

euphoria, saying that everything was perfect in China–unemployment has been wiped out, everybody had food and everything was perfect. Not long afterwards we read of unemployment riots in some cities–in Shanghai and other cities. Then we read that this country, which was supposed to have attained high industrial development, is now totally dependent on western help for its industrial development. Furthermore they are partners with the USA–I do not know, if the USA is a socialist country! Does the hon. Member want us to go back to that position ? Perhaps we have moved slowly. We have not been able to eradicate poverty–nor did we ever say it could be eradicated so soon....(*Interruption*)

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The hon. Member* may have greater inner information than I have but, so for as I understand the situation, the Chinese have not been able to make much industrial development. They have got a number of atomic bombs, but their industrial base is not a strong one and the various experiments they carried out with regard to small scale production of steel etc. are now regarded to have been not as successful as they were thought to be at that time.

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Furthermore, those other Members of the Opposition who are now so loud in their condemnation–I am going to talk about this later, so don't ask questions about it–of Soviet troops in Afghanistan had not a word to say when Chinese troops entered Vietnam.

Now, Sir, even in the very short time that we have been in office, there has already been a marked change in the perceptions of foreign countries of our willingness and ability to play a useful and constructive role in international affairs.

In recent months the world has moved dangerously closer to thermonuclear confrontation among the big Powers. The atmosphere of the cold war has been revised with all its negative consequences. We hear even quite responsible people being carried away by emotion and indulging in talks of mobilisation for war, limited nuclear war, flexible response, and so on.

We must realise that, in this armed to-the-teeth world, the slightest miscalculation may end in an unprecedented catastrophe for the entire human race. Therefore, in what we say or do, we must take into account all the factors and in our own humble way try to defuse the crisis.

We are convinced that, only in an atmosphere of universal peace, can the resources of the world, both financial and technological, be available for the mutual benefit of humanity. Therefore, we are anxious that the present drift towards a hot war should be stopped by the combined efforts of all right-thinking people in the world.

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* Shri Samar Mukherjee.

Hon. Members are rightly concerned about developments in Afghanistan and the decision of the United States, China and some other countries to rush arms into Pakistan. I should like hon. Members to bear with me because once again I should like to give the background of the situation. I want to draw the attention of the House to the sequence of developments in Afghanistan. It is a strategically located country. Some years ago–we all know what happened when we were not free; I am not going into that period–the monarchy was overthrown and Afghanistan became a Republic. President Daud took over power. In April, 1978, another revolution took place and President Tarakki came at the helm of affairs. In November last, he was overthrown by Mr. Amin. Again in December last, President Amin was overthrown, and now President Karmal is the Head of the Government.

To my hon. friend from the Muslim League, I would say-again I cannot vouch for this but we have been told–that it was in the time of Amin himself that help was asked for from Soviet troops.....

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There have been problems between Afghanistan and Pakistan. It was a legacy of the colonial domination of this sub-continent. What happened in Afghanistan was an internal matter of that country. For the past two years, the Afghan Republic has faced numerous internal and external problems. There have been reports of armed attacks from bases located outside the country. We are told that the Government of Afghanistan invoked the provisions of the Treaty it signed with the Soviet Union and asked for military help to meet the threat to the Republic. Whether the request for military assistance was right or not, whether the Soviet Union should have rushed military aid or not, is a matter on which there is division of opinion among the powers of the world. Each one is looking at the problem not at all from the point of view of the people of Afghanistan, but from geo-political and strategic considerations. This will further complicate problems without solving anything. I have stated our own view, which is that we do not approve of foreign presence or intervention anywhere in the world. However, we do not believe in a one-sided condemnation. We have been watching with concern the build-up in the Indian Ocean and some other countries, which is now being stepped up even further with Pakistan becoming one of the important bases for this.

It is necessary to reaffirm our commitment to non-alignment and to emphasize the independence of our judgment on each issue, which is not going to be affected by pressures from any quarter. Our geo-political situation, our commitment to certain fundamental principles, our historical experiences, particularly, since the days of Independence and above all our national interests will be the determining factors in our foreign policy.

As I said, there is a deliberate effort to label us as pro-this or pro-that.We are not pro-any country except pro-India and this is what we intend to remain. When we judge these issues, we judge them from the point of view of our national interest and from what we consider to be in the interest of world peace.

All our efforts are directed at securing the speedy withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. Many big and small powers are involved. The training of armed bands,

providing bases, entering of armed troops across the border and inhabiting another country and some other such activities do not create confidence among neighbours. They only prolong the misery of the people concerned and create conditions of hostility among the States. We cannot but feel disturbed by the reaction of some powers over these developments in Afghanistan. Billions of dollars have been asked for and hundreds of millions have already been committed to Pakistan in military aid by USA. Other powers are being persuaded to make their own contribution to convert Pakistan into an arsenal. The People's Republic of China has also pledged to provide arms and other necessary assistance to Pakistan.

Already contrary to the expressed desires of the littoral States, a naval build-up has been taking place in the Indian Ocean and huge armada is being deployed in the Arabian Sea. This is being done in the name of securing free flow of oil from the Gulf to the industrialised west. This is bound to have reactions, and the Indian Ocean in our region has become an arena of super powers. Old treaties are being invoked and new ones are being forged. Appeals have been made to the religious sentiments of the people of western Asia by outside powers. We know from experience how and against whom these weapons have been used in the past.

We have conveyed our views to Pakistan and the Governments of the United States, Soviet Union and other countries. We have once again told the leaders of Pakistan of our sincere desire to promote frienldy relations and co-operation in every sphere in the spirit of the Simla Agreement. We hope that neighbouring countries will avoid getting involved in this geo-political game of one or another super power and respond positively to the hand of friendship and co-operation which we have extended to them.

We want to improve relations with China, consistent with our national interests and the five principles of peaceful co-existence.

As the President has stated in his Address, we shall further strengthen and deepen our friendly relations with the Soviet Union and consolidate our co-operation with the United States. I want to make it clear that our relations with one country is not at the cost of our relations with another. As a sovereign and independent nation we act in the best interests of our people and the cause of world peace and cooperation.

Some hon. Members have referred to the Islamic bomb. Nuclear bombs and other bombs are weapons of mass destruction. There is nothing Christian, Islamic, Hindu, or Buddhist about them. The production of nuclear bombs, by any country in our region is bound to create a reaction in others which will increase the suspicion and fears of the intentions of the bomb producers. We have made it clear that India has no intention of producing nuclear weapons, but, at the same time we do not give up our right to use nuclear energy for peaceful and developmental purposes.

General Zia-ul-Haq has told us that he will not produce nuclear bombs. We can only hope that he will honour his assurance.

The situation in South-East Asia continues to cause concern. We do not subscribe to the view that any country has a right to teach a lesson to any other country. Instead of using the refugees for interfering with the affairs of the other countries, conditions should be created in which those desirous of returning to their homeland may do so. Refugees should not be made use of as pawns in their power game. However, this new variant of the cold war is taking place in the setting of the international economic crisis fuelled by the higher cost of energy and rise in the prices of industrial equipment. While the situation requires expansion of the world economy by free flow of capital and technology, an ever-expanding world market and a new international monetary system, the cold war climax and the consequent military outbreak will close the avenues for their realisation. The developing countries will be the worst sufferers; they will be subjected to pressures, inducements and even de-stabilisation; they will be drawn into military conflicts. In such a situation, there is a danger of the backward States and the extremist elements being drawn into an adventurist action. We have to keep all these matters in mind while dealing with the extraordinarily grave and delicate international situation.

We believe that the best way to ensure world peace is to break down barriers East-West, North-South confrontation and try for the co-operation of all nations for economic development.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, an hon. Member spoke about the minorities. I don't want to go into the details. We are deeply concerned with the question of employment opportunities for minorities and their other problems. We are equally conscious of the need for economic development for them and the development of the Urdu language which I do not regard as a language of the minorities. People in every State speak Urdu. Initially I had considerable difficulty in understanding the Hindi broadcasts of our Radio or the language used by various Hindi Departments.

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I said initially. Now, I have learnt it.*

In the minorities there are not only our Muslim brothers, although they are the largest in number, there are also many other minorities. We are equally consicous of their problems and the need to help them, specially, towards their development.

While the hon. Member was speaking, my colleague Shri Shiv Shankar was telling me of the work done in Andhra Pradesh for the Urdu Academy. We started that programme and it has been well implemented in Andhra Pradesh in different cities. I should like to congratulate those young members who have made their maiden speeches here, specially, Shri K.K. Tiwary, Shri Madhavrao Scindia and General Sparrow. I congratulate them.

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* Responding to Shri Indrajit Gupta's remark, "Mr. Sathe to note."

I congratulate them also. *I do not know many but I hope to know them soon. Some hon. Members did not get the time to speak. I am sure they will make an equally good contributions later on.

Mr. Speaker, some hon. Members have made the criticism that the President's Address lacks direction. I do not understand this at all. On every important aspect of our national life, the President's Address spells out new directions of Government policy and Government action, whether it be in the field of law enforcement or planning for nation-building or the management of the economy or the welfare of the weaker sections. Our objectives are clear and are surely national in content. I do hope that all Members of this House, whether in the ruling party or in the Opposition, will extend their full support and co-operation in this great task and in successfully meeting the challenges which confront the nation.

Many amendments have been moved on the Motion of Thanks. I have dealt with some of them in my remarks but I have not been able to deal with them extensively because that would take a longer time.

But the socio-economic measures which will be unfolded in the coming months in furtherance of the Government's broad objectives will answer the amendments. So, I request the hon. Members not to press them but to withdraw the amendments.

Sir, I thank all those who have taken part .....

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I have spoken on Assam earlier.** There is nothing specific I can say. Some groups are coming to meet me. We are trying to get in touch with the Leaders of the political parties so that they can also come before Parliament ends.

Perhaps you were not here when I informed the House that we had agreed to Shri Samar Mukherjee's suggestion that the Leaders of the Opposition and we should meet with the leaders of political parties in Assam to try and find a solution. We are fully aware of the difficulties and problems of the Assamese people and also of the hardships and the sufferings which some of them have undergone and the very brutal killing of some people. But anything that is said might aggravate the situation. That is why we think it is better to try to find a solution to this delicate problem and also to try and convince the people that however great the problems are, agitation is not the solution. If Assam deprives some region of some goods, then other regions can deprive it of other essential goods. Similarly, if there is reaction by non-Assamese, then that would only add to the suffering. So, at this time all of us must–however strong our feelings and I can fully understand the extent of your agony–show self-restraint and pool our energies to convince those who are indulging in wrong action and to assure them that the problems which are worrying them will be solved but it cannot be a one-sided solution. The whole picture has to be taken into consideration.

Sir, I commend this Motion to the House.

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* Responding to Shri Indrajit Gupta's remark, "What about those from the Opposition? Many youngmen from here also spoke."

** Replying to the remark of Shri K.P. Unnikrishnan : "What about Assam ?"

Progress with Stability*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have listened very carefully to the speeches of various hon. Members when I could remain present in the House. In the case of others, I have gone through the points they have made. I regret that I could not remain present throughout the debate, as I had wished to do as a similar motion was being discussed in the other House and there were unavoidable engagements connected with the visits of various high foreign dignitaries.

Sir, the debate on the President's Address is an occasion to discuss important Government policies. It obviously cannot spell out all policies. It can deal only with some major areas and some immediate problems. On our part also, we cannot deal with the entire range of issues within three days. Also, Sir, the hon. Membes are well aware that when the President's speech was written, this Government was barely four days old and we were not in a position to go in detail into various aspects as we did not have even the full knowledge of the state of affairs in the country. However, a number of important subjects have been covered by various speakers and I shall try to deal with as many of them as possible.

Before I get on to the more substantial things. I would like to deal briefly with what the Janata and the Lok Dal leaders did, not only to political opponents but also the administration after the 1977 elections. It has now been repeated time and again that they did nothing wrong that there was no persecution. I think all those who were even remotely in touch with our lives at that period are well aware of the campaign of persecution which was launched against me, my family, my personal staff and my colleagues. Entirely politically motivated commissions and inquiring authorities were set up, as many as 34—we are told by the Home Ministry. The manner of their functioning was similar to the witchhunt period of the middle ages, whipping up hysterical campaigns against individuals and falsely implicating them. Judges and heads of commissions openly met the Prime Minister and the Home Minister to receive instructions. This was made obvious when the pronouncements made by the Government were in fact carried out. Is this the independence of the judiciary ?

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Not only were the so-called accused intimidated. Even their old parents, close relatives and even distant relatives were threatened, arrested and maltreated. Indiscriminate searches,

* Replying to the deabte on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *R.S. Deb.*, 30 January, 1980, cc. 323-44.

at times when women were all alone at home, the sealing of bank lockers, the freezing of bank accounts of distant relatives, impounding of passports even in some cases where an entire stranger happened to have just a similar name are indicative of their attitude. In one case the parents were asked to explain expenditure incurred on a marriage which took place in 1947! Several former Ministers were arrested. Shri Gokhale was arrested on a charge for giving certain advice. Similar advice was given by Mr. Shah of the Shah Commission to a private party. But no action was taken against him. Ministers and CBI officers went abroad several times. It would be interesting to know how much was spent on these visits. My own arrest, my expulsion from Parliament and subsequent imprisonment are not hidden from this hon. House and we have many people sitting here who took a very active part in seeing that I should not be spared in any way. They shut their eyes and ears to the plain fact that no illegality or improper action had taken place on our part and hence nothing could be discovered, no matter how many trips they took abroad or within India, no matter how much they tried themselves or with the aid of foreign investigating agencies such as the Interpol. The last such visit by CBI officials took place in the beginning of this very month, January.

Some Janata leaders have protested when I said that orders were passed that my pictures, my father's portraits, should be removed. I have been told by a colleague that there was a question in this House in which the answer clearly stated that the P & T Department had given such an order about Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's portraits.

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I would like to share a small incident with the House which took place, rather which came to my notice, just yesterday. I received a letter. This letter was written in March 1977. It was given to one of our Ambassadors. I received it yesterday with a covering letter with the date of after I was sworn in as the Prime Minister saying that that was not the appropriate time to deliver this letter and, therefore that it was being sent now. The letter, I may add, was entirely non-political. It was by somebody who had written a book on the festivals, the culture and the tourist sites of India. But this shows the atmosphere which was created by the Janata Party and its Government amongst our officials whether they were posted in India or abroad.

Sir, the country is well aware how this campaign is still continuing. The Janata Party and the Lok Dal are not satisfied with what they have done in that period. They obviously are not satisfied with the result of the election and they have not ended their campaign. Some responsible people have complained to me that in Madhya Pradesh and other States such as Rajasthan and U.P., forcible sterilisation is now being carried out and the people are being told that these are the orders of the new Central Government. I have written to the concerned Chief Ministers and I have no hesitation in saying that no such order has emanated from the Central Government. A similar situation has arisen with regard to demolitions of huts of Harijans and other poorer people.

The hand of the RSS which was seen during the last 33 months in administration, in police, in educational institutions and in civic life is still active. In Rajasthan and some

other States, a wide-spread agitation is going on against the reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Who is behind this agitation? In Parliament, the other day, we decided to continue this reservation of seats in legislatures. But these people want to create a type of class war on this issue. Our people believe that the State Government is encouraging this agitation.

The Janata is not the only party persecuting us. The Marxists were allying themselves with Janata until they were convinced that they had no majority. For thirty months, the leftists had forgotten all about RSS communalism. They were a party to the Janata-created crisis and its serious consequences.

The sense of constitutional propriety of many hon. Members was benumbed when the Janata party dismissed Congress Governments in the States in 1977.

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I would just like to know how many people in this hon. House had opposed this at that moment when it took place? How many?

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How many had spoken up against their other irregularities and wrong doings? When they had majority, there was nothing wrong with the electoral system; there was nothing wrong with having a large number of seats. But because we have come, it is said that the electoral system is to be changed; it does not really represent the people. This double thinking and double standard is typical of the Janata party. They are now belittling the decisive mandate by resorting to quibbling and statistical jugglery.

We are advised on various platforms by the Marxists to adopt the socio-economic philosophy of China which is now a partner of capitalist Europe and America. We have chosen the path of democracy in all facets of our national life. We do not want to follow the path which China has followed, the path which led them to total isolation until recently and the paths which has now drawn them into the arms of capitalist society.

Sir, in this House, mention was made by several Members to Centre-State relations. The Constitution gives full rights to the States and we are anxious that this should not be diluted in any way. I have declared many a time that if there is any special difficulty, we will always be ready to discuss such matters with them. However, nothing should be done to weaken the Centre and lessen its capacity to help the weaker States or weaker areas or weaker sections or to handle situations of crisis to strengthen and enhance the prestige of the nation. The Centre is also called upon to help in Inter-State disputes although the best way of solving such differences is to have an acceptable arrangement between the States concerned themselves. This matter was also gone into in detail by the Administrative Reforms Commission and they recommended that no change in the Constitution was called for.

There has been lot of shouting and anxiety expressed about the dissolution of the State Assemblies. Perhaps, this is the result of a guilty conscience of the Janata and the Lok Dal Parties. In 1977 they took the unprecedented step of demanding that various Chief Ministers should resign and dissolve their Legislative Assemblies or face action by the Centre. When they refused to oblige, the Centre at one stroke dissolved these Legislative Assemblies. The same people now loudly clamour that in spite of the verdict of the people in favour of our parties, Assemblies in the States ruled by the Janata Party or the Lok Dal should not be dissolved. This shows inconsistency of their stand and the lack of principle underlying their argument. Numerous other people, such as Governors and others, were made to quit their posts at that time.

I believe that there is also an effort being made that these State Governments should create as much difficultly for the Centre as possible in the implementation of our declared objectives and declared programmes in our election manifesto. Some hon. Members have moaned about stabilisation or destabilisation. Who started this process ? Agitational politics was resorted to from 1973 to 1975, taking advantage of the difficult economic situation that was fuelled by the international economic crisis, the monetary crisis, energy crisis, internal economy, severe drought conditions and last but not least, the burden of the Bangladesh war. The experiment was started in Gujarat and then extended to Bihar. It was the same people who started the process of destabilisation in this country who are now charging us of destabilisation. It was they who started the physical assaults and civil disobedience, including the call to the Army and the Police to disobey lawful orders of the Government. Even a hunger strike was resorted to for the dissolution of the Gujarat Assembly. External forces also assisted in the manipulations.

Stability seems to have become a dirty word in the political lexicon of certain forces. Having worked for instability through inherently contradictory alliance they now feel rebuffed by the electorate. On our part, we see stability as an integral element of progress and advancement, of a decisive thrust forward for change and development, of social transformation and of political cohesion. Stability means not whether governments are changing or not changing or even how much majority a government has. I should like to remind this hon. House that for nearly a year and a half my Government was in a minority, but there was no feeling of insecurity anywhere in the country. Inscurity is how the people feel. That the people felt insecure and they felt that the country was unstable even when the Janata had 250 members, that is a fact of life. And that today with our coming they feel the opposite, that is also a fact of life. Therefore, instability is not going to come whether a government goes or stays, but in how the government is functioning and how secure different sections of the people feel, how secure the weaker sections feel, how secure the minorities, whether they are the Muslims or the Christians or the Sikhs or the Buddhists, feel. That is what security is.

Assam is a very delicate subject just now. I sympathise with those who are suffering there, who are being denied various essentials. Every life is valuable, but experts are especially so. We share the sorrow of these people with anguish in our hearts. But I also share the feelings of the hon. Member who said here that at this moment, the major concern

should be how to ease the tension, how to defuse hatred or dislike. And that cannot happen if we blame one another. This is why even when you know what is happening you try not to talk about it—rather not to give it publicity. We can certainly talk about it. I have discussed this matter with the Leaders of the Opposition parties and, you all know that I accepted their suggestion that we should call the leaders of the political parties in Assam and discuss this matter with them so that we can find a solution to which, we hope, they will also subscribe. If we find a solution here and those people say, "we are not going to honour it", it will not help us in any way. That is why it is important not to aggravate such feelings. I have personally seen during the language riots in Assam how very sensitive and touchy the people become and the most innocent remark leads to an aggravation of the whole situation and it may even lead to somebody dying or being injured. That is why we feel that in such situations, we must be extremely careful with our words and our actions. It does not mean a lack of concern. In fact, it means the opposite. So deep is our concern, so deep is our anxiety that we must, rather than talking about it, bend all our energies to solve the problem while appreciating the difficulties of the local people—but in "local" there are people of all religions and languages—and appreciating the difficulties of all those who are today being called foreigners.

Today even those who had settled in Assam in the wake of Partition and in the migration from what was then East Pakistan in 1964 are being branded as foreigners. People speaking non-Assamese Indian languages are being intimidated.

Some initiatives have been taken. Detailed discussions with the Governor have taken place. The students are coming to meet me. I am meeting them tomorrow. In the meantime, we have intensified the patrolling on the border to make it more difficult for people to come in. Before we make other comments, we should wait until these meetings are over and see what is their outcome.

An hon. Member has drawn attention to the recent crime wave in Delhi. It is obvious that this is a continuation of the crime wave which has been sweeping the capital during the last 33 months. The number of cognizable crimes in Delhi is : 1976—23,105, 1977—35,856, 1978—43,383 and only the first half of 1979—21,370. This shows what a stupendous task we have before us to improve the law and order situation.

Atrocities on Harijans were mentioned in the President's Address. As you know, I was one of the very few people—I do not know actually if anybody else went to reach Belchi in very difficult circumstances and at a time when my own party members there were very reluctant to allow me to go and had made absolutely no arrangements. It was only when my party and I expressed our determined wish to go there even if we had to walk all night and we had actually started walking that they hurriedly produced an elephant. That could only give some relief to three or four of us and the rest including my hon. friend Mr. Sharma had to do it on foot, even swimming where the road was broken. And of course I do not want to forget the ladies. My friend, Mrs. Saroj Khaparde—I do not know where she is

sitting—braved it also and did the whole trip on foot. Now, the atrocities on the Harijans :

The number of cases reported in :

1976	5,986
1977	10,879
1978	15,059
1979 (upto September)	10,492

These are all figures gathered at the time of the Janata party rule.

Communal violence : It is certainly understandable if concern was expressed for the rising trend in communal violence during the last 33 months. But one hon. Member went on to say that the violence was due to wrong policy of the Congress and that there was no communal violence during the Janata rule. I should like to quote some figures to refute the statement. Actually, there is no need for figures. You have only to see the feelings of the minorities themselves. You have only to go to Jamshedpur, to Aligarh or to Purnea or any of the numerous places where such clashes have taken place, to talk to them. And the same is true about the Harijans. It is not what we did or we did not do. Even if we leave that aside, what do the Harijans themselves feel ? What have they said ? This is the question and this has made very clear to me. In fact, it is my concern for them and my deep distress at the stories they told me as early as May, 1977 or even earlier, perhaps, I think, the end of April, 1977, which urged me to go to some of the places which I visited and to come back into public life. Before that I was sitting quiet. These Harijans whose lands had been taken back from them, the Harijans who had been driven out of their villages, who had been driven out of their houses, and whose houses had been burnt, the Harijans in whose drinking water wells dirt had been thrown, and the tribals started coming to me atmost immediately and after the Parliamentary election in 1977 with facts and figures which we were told. I had specially gone at that time to see the Prime Minister Mr. Morarji Desai, to tell him to take special personal interest to see that was stopped and that they were accorded protection.

Coming back to the communal clashes :

In 1976 :	No of incidents	169
	No. of people killed	39
	No. of people injured	794
In 1977 :	No. of incidents	188
	No. of persons killed	36
	No. of persons injured	1119

In 1978 :	The figure of incidents goes up to	230
	No. of persons killed	110
	No. of persons injured	1853
In 1979 :	No. of incidents goes up to	297
	No. of persons killed	260
	No. of persons injured	2346

I may add that these are Janata party Government figures, the figures given in the various cities where communal riots took place, and which I visited, were far higher than these. In fact, I doubt if the Muslim community which suffered, will accept these figures at all.

I do not have to remind this House or the general public that the Congress has always stood for and promoted communal harmony in our country. Whenever there had been communal tension from the days of Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, Congressmen were the first to rush there to help in establishing peace and to help in affording relief to the victims. The leaders of the Congress Party were the first to condemn the communal violence. All of you know that when this violence has taken place in the last 33 months, members of the Janata Party themselves, named some of their partners as being responsible for the clashes. It is no wonder that the law and order situation worsened and that Harijans and minorities were the special victims of this persecution. The police and para-military forces which are normally expected to provide protection, were thoroughly demoralised because of political interference, which ultimately compelled some of them to go on strike. They had to resort to an agitational approach for the redress of their grievances. In this situation, the police was not eager to register cases when complaints reached them. They were not eager to chase the culprits when thefts took place. They were not eager to bring to book anti-social elements when Harijans and minorities were intimidated. In many instances, cases had to be withdrawn if the involved people belonged to the then ruling party, especially in the States.

The Leader of the Opposition has referred to the misuse of mass media. I think all our people on this side are well aware of the misuse of the media made by him and his Government by distorting and suppressing facts, by giving repeated publicity to statements which were not substantiated later, by overplaying news concerning not his own party but his group in that party and by coercing proprietors of newspapers to remove journalists who did not follow their line. The media lost credibility to such an extent that even solid supporters of the Janata Party confessed that they had to listen to foreign broadcasts for a more correct version of what was happening in India. Some hon. Members sitting opposite, Shri Piloo Mody and Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh from the Opposition, have tried to show that the last two-and-a-half years have been good years of economic growth. Whom are they trying to fool ?

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The facts are entirely contrary to this, as any report produced in their time by the Government will prove. I can only give some selected indicators. If you want more figures, they are easily available. The average annual rate of growth of Gross National Product during 1974-77 was 3.8 per cent; from 1977 till now it is 3.2 per cent. The increase in index of industrial production then was 6.1% now it is 3.8 per cent. Exports : 26.8 per cent then; now 6.2 per cent. Electricity generation : 9.9 per cent then; now, 7.1 per cent. Coal production : 8.7 per cent then : now minus 0.4 per cent. Railways : revenue earning traffic—tonnes originating : 9.5 per cent then; now, minus 3.4 per cent.

The hon. Member, Shri Mody talked of the Janata Government bringing down sugar prices to Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 3.00 per kilo. He has ignored the fact that this was only a temporary phenomenon resulting from high production of sugarcane. Even this was brought about by the progressive policies towards sugarcane farmers followed in the past which helped them to grow more cane. But the sugar policy was not steady and resulted in prices shooting up to even Rs. 6.00 per kilo from early 1979 onwards. Even the issue price of levy sugar had gone to Rs. 2.85 per kilo under the Lok Dal Government as against Rs. 2.15 per kilo when the Congress Government had left power. I might also say that the treatment of the sugarcane growers was such that for the next crop, many have decided not to go in for sugarcane. Hence we face a situation when there will be an actue sugar shortage. Why have they done so. Because they went to Choudhury Charan Singh and perhaps also to the Prime Minister. They were told, "why have you grown so much sugarcane ? Who told you to grow so much sugarcane ?" This was their attitude. Instead of solving people's problems and trying to help them, there was always an attitude which created further difficulties for them and which was bound to create difficulties for the nation as a whole later on. There has been talk also of stability in prices in the last 30 months. What are the figures ? The wholesale index average for the year 1974-75 was 174.9, in 1975-76–173, in 1976-77—176, in 1977-78 it shoots up to 185.8 and it remained at that. Annual rate of inflation was 25.2 in 1974-75; the next year we brought it down to—1.9. In 1976-77 it went up a little to 2. But next year it goes up to 5.2 and for this year it was estimated at 17; but this is an estimated figure. Prices rose in 1973-74 and 1974-75. But anti-inflational measures of the late 1974 resulted in a continuous decline of prices for the next 18 months. Prices rose by 20 per cent during 1979. But the then Government which was in a much stronger position because of food and foreign exchange reserves could not control the inflation. Prices of several essential commodities registered a very sharp increase from March 1977 to July 1979. There was a much bigger jump in respect of some commodities of daily consumption from July to December 1979 causing alround misery. This is wholesale price index. I have also separate figure for surveys which took place in Delhi, in Bombay and so on which are even clearer, but I do not want to take the time of the House.

Now I have here figures of wholesale price index from March 1977 to July 1979 in percentage. Onions which rose by 41.5 per cent in 1977-79, from July to December 1979 went up to 139.8 per cent. Sugar which by 2.8 per cent between March 1977 and July 1979 went up to 11.1 per cent in July to December, 1979, Cereals which rose by 4.3 per cent went up to 10.3 per cent. Edible oils from 5.9 per cent to 9.4 per cent.

The Janata Party has claimed that the export of foodgrains under their Government was because they stepped up agricultural production. Agricultural production cannot be stepped up as a miracle. It did increase in 1977-79 but so it did in previous years also. They had good rain and they had the infrastructure which we had built which had helped the farmer to increase his production. Food production increased from 69 million tonnes in 1955-56 to 121 million tonnes in 1975-76. The export of foodgrains was made possible only because of the buffer stocks of 20 million tonnes which we had left in March 1977. These stocks were built by massive procurement in the years 1975-77.

Irrigation : I heard one Member quoting a Soviet expert. That expert rightly praised Indian planning in that context, because it was the proper planning and investment in the earlier years of Congress rule which enabled the creation of irrigation potential of this high order in 1977-78. Irrigation projects take time to yield benefit. And therefore the benefits in 1977-79 arose only from projects which had been planned and started much earlier.

I share the deep concern of honourable Members about unemployment. This problem has to be tackled by certain immediate programmes and finally to have real impact by development as a whole. We have promoted programmes like the 20-point programme, small farmers development agencies, etc. which will increase employment opportunities. In the five years from 1972 these gave a high level of employment. In 1972, the size of the labour force in millions was 240 and the level of unemployment in millions was 16.6. In 1977-78, the size of the labour force was 273 millions, but the level of unemployment remained about the same. This clearly shows that nearly 33 millions added to the labour force have found employment.

What is the record of the Janata Party in this field? The number of job seekers on the Live Registers of Employment Exchange, increased sharply even in 1977-78 from 10.81 millions to 12.33 millions. This was the period when those Governments were talking constantly about relieving unemployment.

In any debate, there is always a reference to *Garibi Hatao* and the increase in the number of people below the poverty line between 1966 and 1976. What is the source of the figures given by the hon. Member, I do not know. In any case those figures are not correct. According to the estimates made in the Planning Commission, the number of people below the poverty line in 1968-69 was about 28 crores representing 53 per cent of the total population. By 1977-78, this had come down to about 49 per cent as the percentage of the total population. These estimates can only be approximate and the removal of poverty is not something to be accomplished in a few years. It is a process that will take a long time and we must dedicate ourselves to this task.

Figures and statistics give different types of pictures. I myself have been travelling continuously, not from today, not since I am in office, but long before that. Except for some breaks while I was abroad, almost continuously I have been travelling either with my parents or alone since 1930. I have, therefore, had the opportunity of seeing the changes. I have been to places where there were no roads and places where I had to walk twelve miles a day for several days and I have seen the changes in the people. There is change in

the health especially of children and women, there is change in the clothes they wear. Therefore, to go on saying that nothing has been done in all these years is not a matter to be proud of because you are denigrating not the Congress Party, but the people of India. It is their endeavour, their struggle and it is their hard work that has achieved this. What we have done is to help them by having the correct policy and by giving a definite direction in which they should move. But the endeavour and sacrifice has been theirs, whether it is our farmers or industrial workers or our brilliant young technologists, engineers, scientists and professional people.

The industrial production in 1979 has declined very sharply. There have been months together of zero or negative growth. This naturally had its impact on the external trade. Poor manufactures have necessitated higher imports. Items such as steel, cement, coal and aluminium some of which we were exporting are now being imported in large quantities. Imports have registered a growth of 18.8 per cent in 1977-78 over 1976-77, and 12.7 per cent in 1978-79 over the previous year. That also shows a high increase in the period of April to November 1979. When the percentage in the increase in imports touches 16.8 per cent. This has led to the widening of the trade deficit. The balance of trade has gone up in April to November 1978. The figure is provisional. In that period it was minus Rs. 729.25 crores. And next year, 1979, April—November it was about minus Rs. 1181.3 crores.

An hon. Member complained that the public sectors had languished during the Janata rule and asked what the new Government is doing. During our last year in Government, i.e. 1976-77, the public sector had made a net profit of Rs. 239 crores. In the first year of the Janata rule, there was a net loss of Rs. 91 crores...(*Interruptions*). What we have built up brick by brick was damaged within two years. We have to motivate the workers and the managers of the public sector again to put in their best. They are capable of better performance and I have no doubt they will show much better results from now on...(*Interruptions*).

Before I go on to the foreign policy a word about Nagaland. I should like to assure the hon. Member who spoke about this of my deep sympathy for the Naga people. Perhaps he knows that when I first formed the Government in 1966 there was severe fighting in Nagaland. It was I who took the initiative, called the leaders here, and as a result of long talks—when at times it seemed almost impossible that they would yield any results—we reached an agreement. Nagaland formed its own Government and started on development works. I know it has a long way to go but the people are talented and patriotic, and I am sure that with their hard work and whatever help we can give, they will soon achieve a better standard of living... (*Interruptions*).

This applies not only to the Nagas but to all our tribal people. They have had a raw deal over the centuries, and it is our duty now—we cannot make up for this in a few years—to bend all our energies to do as much as possible, whether they are Mizos, Khasis, Garos or other tribal people in different parts of India.

We must also assure greater representation to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and the minorities in the spheres of service and national activity. That is not only fair to them but essential for national harmony and the strengthening of our society.

We are committed to an effective public distribution system. We had just started to form it. It was not easy for us to build up the system because that was a period of shortages. But we did hope that once the shortage was over, this system would be strengthened. Unfortunately the Janata Party does not believe in this type of service to the people and, therefore, they did not keep it up. Now to build it again and make it effective is going to be one of the task which has to be undertaken.

Our foreign policy has always been consistent. The world today is at a critical juncture in the unending East-West rivalry for dominance. We do not wish to be a part of this rivalry. In fact, we want it to be channelled constructively. We also appeal to our neighbour to realise that the history of the post-War period has unquestionably demonstrated that smaller countries have nothing to gain by becoming pawns in the battle of supremacy between the other powers.

It has been our sad experience that arms given to Pakistan for whatever purpose have always been used against India. We are not afraid of Pakistan conquering India. But we are concerned that the induction of arms into Pakistan will encourage those who are against the process of normalisation.

We feel that the solution to the problem of Afghanistan should emerge from this region without interference by outside power. We are prepared to initiate dialogues with our neighbours to achieve this end, and we appeal to our friends not to take any action that would frustrate this objective. There is not much that I wish to say regarding our foreign policy at this stage. Somebody has said that there is confusion in my mind or that I have been changing. I have not changed my attitude. I made it clear during the election campaign and that has remained our approach since that is in line with our policy of non-alignment. Especially at this time our first and major concern is for the achievement of detente. We emphasize the stand we have taken. Detente was a big step towards lasting world peace. Unfortunately, now that has been thrown to the winds and once again we have the cold war situation. Europe has a genius of picking up problems which are basically European problems and putting them on to some other continent so that they themselves can avoid the unpleasantness and misery. The rivalry between the big powers has left the European borders and is causing tension in Asia. Our major concern today is not to see who is right and who is wrong, but to see how we can possibly prevent this cold war from turning into a fighting hot war. This is our major concern and that is why we are being extremely careful about what we say. The broad outlines of our foreign policy have been clearly defined in the President's Address. I should like to emphasise that the mandate which we have received from the people has considerably enhanced the prestige of India in the rest of the world. The world sees in it a strong and stable Government which is capable of projecting the right image of India and playing our traditionally leading role in international affairs.

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Obviously, we stand by whatever we said in our election manifesto*. Or else why did we put it there ? We have declared our policy regarding Kampuchea even before the

* Replying to the remarks of Shri Jagjit Singh Anand : "What about Kampuchea ? It was mentioned in your election manifesto."

elections were declared and before there was any question of a manifesto. The Janata Party is very strong in asking us to condemn what has happened in Afghanistan. I do not remember if they condemned the Chinese aggression in Vietnam or the bringing down of democratic regimes and other interferences in different parts of the world. As I said earlier, we have not changed our minds about these matters. They are consistent with our foreign policy which has been clear from the beginning and we have no intention of diverting from it. One hon. Member mentioned Kampuchea. I would ask the Janata Party whether they have not heard of the atrocities committed on the people there when half the population was wiped out by the Pol Pot regime. I have not heard a word of condemnation or any desire for democracy there or any such sentiment expressed by most of the Members sitting opposite here. One hon. Member referred to India's relations with the ASEAN countries. We have established good relations with ASEAN countries and propose to strengthen them further. Just within a week of the formation of my Government, I had very useful talks with the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia.

Mention has also been made of the African people's struggle in Southern Africa. Our firm support to the African people for majority rule in Southern Africa is so well known that it needs no reiteration. It is a deliberate mischief to even suggest that there can be any change in our constant stand in support of the people of Southern Africa. Fortunately, the people who are involved in the struggle know me and my policies. They know the support which we have always given them and which we shall continue to give them until they are fully free. One hon. Member opposite knows of my very close involvement with the struggle in South Africa. I have not dealt with the amendments separately but have covered most of them in my reply. I hope hon. Members will not press their amendments now. The principal directions of the Government's policy have been set out in the President's Address and in the coming weeks and months, this House will have an opportunity to consider various matters that the Government will bring forward to give a concrete shape to its commitment to resume the process of national building, a process in which I hope to have the co-operation of all sections of the House. I thank all the hon. Members for the interest they have taken and the contribution they have made to this debate. Now that they have expressed their views in full, may I request them once more to withdraw their amendments ? The enormous task facing the Government and the nation demands the co-operation of all. Thank you for your attention.

Sir, I now commend the Motion moved by Shri A.R. Antulay to the House.

Working for a Self-Reliant India*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, a discussion of this nature on a subject as serious as the President's Address is not just to score debating points, although that also is a part of parliamentary life and adds zest to the proceedings. It is an occasion to look seriously at the problems which confront us. It seemed to me–while I was listening to the speeches, I did not hear all of them–that except in a few there was a singular lack of sense of urgency or any attempt to fathom the increasing complexity of national and global issues. Some Members admitted to have boycotted the Address. Frankly I doubt whether they took the trouble of reading it very carefully even afterwards. One Member complained that there was no reference to the uplift of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. Obviously, he had missed para 16.

People are naturally most concerned about the economic situation. So are we. Increasing prices hit all people, especially the average citizen and even more the housewives, the women and the poor and middle classes.

What is the total picture of the economic situation. The seventies was a decade of inflation and general stagnation of output and employment all over the world. In our previous regime, we had dealt effectively with this problem. Even when the Indian economy was crippled by failures of power and the sudden rise in international prices of petroleum products and other imports, we did succeed in stabilising our economy. While other countries were staggering under high rates of inflation, we did bring down our prices: we were able to maintain a steady, rapid growth. Now I know that people get rather bored over figures, but I must mention some of them. In the years 1969 to 1974, i.e. the Fourth Plan, the national income average rate of growth was 3 : 4 per cent. In 1974 to 1977 it was 4:1 per cent. In the years 1977 to 1980, it came down to 3.3 per cent. I am sorry I have to go back in years. In 1975-76, according to the Economic Survey, it was 9:6 per cent. In 1979-80, it was minus 4.5 per cent. Some hon. Members–at least I heard one: I do not know whether others too mentioned it–have quoted the World Bank report relating to the fiscal years 1976 to 1979. This clearly indicates lack of understanding of the meaning of the term "fiscal period 1976–79" because in the World Bank parlance, this includes two years 1975-76 and 1976-77 and also 1977-78 and 1978-79. Of these, the highest growth rate was in 1975-76; it was 9.6 per cent. Also, may I point out that in 1979-80 these was an actual fall in GNP by about 4.5 per cent. I have said this before, but I am repeating it to make it clear because of this reference. In spite of the difficulties as a result of the Bangladesh war, acute drought leading to harvest failures, the unexpected sharp rise in prices of petroleum products and steep increase in our cost of imports by 1975-76, we

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *R.S. Deb.*, 25 February, 1981, *cc.* 199-208.

were able to bring, through right policies and tremendous effort and even unpopular decisions, a proper balance to the management of our economy. Let us compare the results or our policies for the years 1974 to 1977 with the results of the policies of the Janata Party Lok Dal Governments for 1977 to 1980. Here are some figures. Now, as regards the annual rate of growth of GNP at 1970-71 prices, the percentages are: in 1974 to 1977, 4.1 ; in 1977 to 1980, 3.3.

The growth rate of food production in 1974 to 1977–2.8; in 1977 to 1980–0.2. The industrial growth rate: 1974 to 1977– 6.7; 1977 to 1980–3.2.

The growth rate of export at the current prices: 1974 to 1977–26.6; 1977 to 1980– 7.8.

The growth rate of the index of the agricultural production: 1974 to 77–1·7; 1977 to 1980– 0.8.

The growth in the foreign exchange reserve, excluding gold and SDRs: 1974 to 1977–80.4 ; 1977 to 1980–24.

The growth in the wholesale price index, with 1970-71 = 100 on point to point basis:– In 1974 to 1977–5:2; in 1977 to 1980 – 7:8.

The growth in the consumer price index, with 1976 = 100, March to March basis: in 1974 to 1977–5 per cent; in 1977 to 1980, 6.2.

I do not want to keep on harping on the failures of the Janata Party and the Lok Dal Governments. But some facts have to be restated because of the statements made from the other side. A distressing but inescapable fact is that the infrastructure was allowed to run to seed. I shall quote some more figures which bear this out:

The growth rate in the electricity generation, utilities only in 1974 to 1977–9·8; in 1977 to 1980–5.9.

The growth rate in production of coal and lignite: 1974 to 1977–8.8; 1977 to 1980– 0.6.

The growth rate in the railway traffic in tonne km: 1974 to 1977–9.6; 1977 to 1980–0.2.

The growth rate in production of the finished steel: 1974 to 1977–15.6; 1977 to 1980– (—) 4.6.

Reference has also been made to low capacity utilisation of our thermal power plants. What is the actual picture ? The thermal power capacity utilisation: 1976 to 1977–55.3 per cent. ; 1979 to 1980–45.4 per cent–November, 1980 to February, 1981, 47.4 per cent.

We are not complacent as several Members opposite tried to make out, and the President has clearly stated this in his Address. We do realise that we have a long way to go. The world energy situation is not easy, and we are fully conscious that we have to increasingly depend on our own sources and technologies. The hon. Members are aware of my personal concern and of our strenuous efforts to harness renewable sources of energy for use in agriculture as well as in industry.

The Sixth Plan itself is a proof of the correctness of our direction. It sets our goals with the limits of our financial and other constraints. Some Members have tried to compare this with the Janata Party's so called Plan. That I am afraid was a Plan that never was. It was rolled up like the old bedding rolls that we use to have. Neither the Janata Government nor the Lok Dal Government gave their approval to it. Is this not sufficient evidence that the sponsor themselves had no faith in it ?

I now come to industry. The improvement in the infrastructure is slowly reflecting itself in higher industrial productivity, vital sectors are showing increased utilisation of the installed capacities and industrial labour has also responded positively. The number of man-days lost on account of labour problems in 1978 was 28.34 millions; in 1979–43.87 millions; in 1980–of course, this figure is provisional–12.91 millions. I must admit that now there seems to be an increasing resort to strikes and "go slow" movement. I can only sincerely hope that politicians will not feel tempted to try to reverse the healthy trend to which I have referred. This favourable environment in labour relations has been sought to be vitiated in some areas by interested parties who are intent on misguiding labour to serve their own ends. I sincerely hope that responsible section of labour leadership will not allow themselves to be taken in, and will cooperate in arriving at constructive solutions that are in the long-term interests of the workers themselves as well as of our nation. Unless the economy prospers, no section can do well, even if they do get a temporary advantage.

I do not normally like to get involved in controversies between the public sector and the private sector. This has been overdone. But now does it help for some people to continue to decry the public sector and its performance ? When the Government was committed to the public sector, and is committed to the public sector, and has encouraged it, the public sector has performed well, as it did during 1974 to 1977. However, in the Janata Party and Lok Dal period, there was a marked deterioration. The average pre-tax profit in the public sector undertakings in 1974-77 was Rs. 346 crores; in 1977-80, Rs. 190 crores. Of course, it is yet to re-attain the vitality necessary to come up to our expectations.

An hon. Member alleged that the Plan does not refer to land reforms. On the contrary, it lays down in no uncertain terms our commitment to various land reform policies and measures to implement them. It is ridiculous and untrue to allege that we are not concerned with the welfare of our farmers. The base of our party has been and is, the base of our country is our farmers. Unless they get facilities, India cannot prosper. But the agricultural and industrial sectors are closely inter-linked. Each is dependent on the other. Without a strong industrial base, we cannot help the rural areas or the poorer sections. Also let us not forget that the better-off people cannot be secured unless and until the weaker sections are strengthened. Agriculturists and industrialists should see their problems in the context of the wider national scene. And the same applies to other sections of our people.

When we came back to Government, we were faced with an unprecedented drought, for which the previous Government had done precious little. We initiated immediately vigorous action at the Central and State levels to minimise the hardships of the farming community and specially of agricultural workers. Even during this year certain regions

are in the grip of severe drought. However, as a result of the measures taken, including supply of inputs, fixation of better prices, etc., there is indication of a record food-grains output this year which I am told will be about 132 million tonnes.

The law and order situation also has a history. The agitation of the Opposition parties towards the end of my previous regime had already weakend the national fabric and eroded civil authority. This was followed by the Janata Party Government which gave free rein to those whose anti-social activities we had checked. At the same time, not only was disregard for authority brought in and communalism and casteism injected in a big way, affecting even some sections of the police, but also regrettably, those arms of the Government which in our system of Government, should be non-political were politicalised. Even now, while Governments at the Centre and in the States have taken steps to curb lawlessness, some political parties are busy in encouraging each and every agitation regardless of the disharmony created or the tensions generated.

The arousing of communal passions had given rise to insecurity among minorities. And by minorities I do not mean only the Muslims. In various areas other communities are minorities. Then there are minorities who are based on the language they speak. Having said this, I must also state that I share the concern of the hon. Members about the problems of the minorities as well as the general law and order situation. We regard the protection of the minorities as a national responsibility. The National Integration Council has been revived and we hope that those who have chosen to stay out of its deliberations and those of its committees will eventually help in fostering peace and amity among different sections of our people. Some hon. Members have complained that the Government has refused to cooperate with the Opposition in solving the Assam problem. I have heard only one speech like this. There may have been more. This is a fantastic statement. If there is one issue on which the Government have been all the time consulting the Opposition either collectively or separately, it is the Assam issue. Unfortunately, even here some opposition parties have openly supported the continuance of an agitation which has caused immense suffering to all sections of the people of Assam and the North-East, especially the weakest and the economically most backward, the plain and hill tribals. Even the steps which the agitators want cannot be taken because of this obstruction. We have shown great understanding and patience in dealing with this problem. Unfortunately, this attitude has not been reciprocated by those who are responsible for the agitation. Some elements seem to be resorting to bomb attack and other acts of terrorism now. Can a Government remain a silent spectator when such incidents take place ? We are trying and shall continue to try to find out a lasting solution to the foreigners problem which would be acceptable to all sections of the people. This can only be through discussions and consultations in an atmosphere free from violence and distrust. We have said on many occasions, privately, publicly and in different forums, that we are always prepared to continue such discussions.

The situation in Gujarat has caused me deep pain and anguish. It is tragic that the State which gave birth to Mahatma Gandhi should now witness these deplorable incidents. We have the moral obligation as well as the constitutional responsibility to advance the educational interests of the weaker sections of our society and in particular the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. Here also, it is a pity that some political parties seem to be instigating the students and others to create confrontation when none need exist. We hope that saner elements will prevail and end this ill-advised agitation. If the weaker

sections in this country are to take their rightful place in society, we must accelerate the process of their economic and social advancement. A high-powered panel is already going into this matter. But, naturally, we must ensure that merit does not suffer and no section feels that it is being discriminated against.

An hon. Member spoke about women. I hesitate to speak on women lest I be accused of partiality. But our leaders have all agreed on the importance of helping them to be equal partners and sharers, otherwise no plans can be properly implemented and the nation itself cannot rise. The National Plan of Action for women serves as a guideline to the Central and State Governments. Measures seeking to amend the laws relating to rape and dowry are before the Committees of Parliament. They need careful thought and detailed consideration which, I am sure, the Members on those Committees and other hon. Members will give them. A programme of special relevance to women is the family planning programme. After the disastrous set-back that this programme suffered in the period since 1977, it has begun to pick up some little momentum. It is my firm belief that our people, especially our women, even in the rural areas, do want family planning as an important means of improving the quality of their lives and giving better opportunities to their children. It is as much in the interest of individual families as the national interest. In fact, we have always promoted this programme not merely from the point of view of population control, but in order to have healthier and happier families.

I come now to foreign policy. Just as we are rectifying the distortions in our economy and strengthening our political system, we are also bringing our foreign policy back on to the track of non-alignment. A movement which was regarded as divided and weak is once more starting to consolidate its position. This is reflected in the perceptions of countries all over the world. We seek no leadership. We believe in the cooperative effort of working together in partnership with others. This is what has brought us success and appreciation for our efforts in the chancelleries of the world. The recently concluded Non-aligned Conference and the earlier CHOGREM meeting were appluaded for our balanced and constructive approach. I wonder how those who criticised this Conference have so soon forgotten disastrous performance of the Lok Dal delegation to the earlier Commonwealth Conference in Lusaka or the back seat taken in Havana. However, we have now to look to the future rather than to the past. Our aim should be to create a strong and self-reliant India which will secure the well-being of our people and maintain our standing and prestige abroad. In this task, we need and seek the cooperation of every section of our people and I hope that it will be forthcoming in good measure from all parties.

Hon. Members, if I have criticised some aspects of the previous Government, it is not for the sake of criticism or, as I said earlier of scoring points. It is only to clarify the issues raised by the Opposition. I have no desire to waste time or energy in mutual recreminations. There is a time for everything and this is certainly a time for working together. We have definite policies which have stood the test of time. By "we" I mean our party. But we are open to new ideas and suggestions. The world itself is in the grip of crises–economic, social

and even possibly cultural, and crisis of civilization and so on, as every leader who has visited here or whom I have had the opportunity of meeting, in Salisbury or in Belgrade, has touched on many international issues but has been largely concerned with these problems with which his own country is confronted. Hon. Members can see this for themselves in the reports which appear in national and the international newspapers.

In this situation which every country is facing, naturally, the burdens and difficulties of a poorer country, a country which is already economically backward and has much leeway to make up, become all the heavier. So, let us discuss matters calmly and coolly and try to solve problems and difficulties in a spirit of nationalism.

We live in a great country. We have the good fortune to have a wonderful people. Let us try to be worthy of them.

Sir, I commend the Motion of Thanks to the President.

Upheaval in the Economy*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am somewhat in a dilemma. I had hoped to avoid any kind of recrimination and repetition of the comparisons which so upset and excite the hon. Members of Opposition. But the tenor of many of their remarks, the quoting of figures out of context–the hon. Member who launched the attack seemed to attach almost scriptural significance to a particular document–these leave me no choice but to refer to that period. But I assure you Sir, and the House that I do so without any bitterness or any feeling of satisfaction. I do not seek alibis nor do I wish needlessly to irritate anyone.

The non-performance or the mis-performance of the Janata Party and Lok Dal Government is not hidden. Much of it was admitted by the hon. Members sitting opposite themselves at that time as well as later. These debates are always interesting, not only for the ideas expressed but for the measure one has of the speakers. I have listened to many of the speeches but not all. Apart from a few, there was more sound and fury than substance. From our side several hon. Members made spirited defence and many of the points made by the Opposition were well answered. This makes my task easier.

I was amazed to hear an extraordinary statement accusing us of making the President express our views. The President's Address has to reflect the policies and perception of the Government in power. That happens to be the consitutional position. It is ridiculous to say that we have brought the President within the pale of controversy. The President's Address, it is well recognised, is a policy document of the Government. Had it been the President's own statement hon. Members would not be introducing amendments.

An astounding and non-sensical theory was propounded that Shri Charan Singh's Government was our creation. Nothing can be farther from the truth. We protested strongly that he had no claim to form a Government at that time. (*Interruptions*)

When we resigned in 1977 we left the House in good condition. It was harmonious in the sense that the law and order situation was satisfactory. The communal situation, while not what we desired, seemed to be under control, the grain godowns were overflowing and foreign exchange reserves were excellent. But what did we find on return ? The intervening years proved to be years not merely of drift and indecision but, what is much worse–years of disally. The thrust that we had given to the economy in the mid-seventies had generated its own momentum which continued to take the country forward for a while

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *L.S. Deb.*, 26 February, 1981, cc. 235-252.

even afterwards, until for want of direction and support it began to slow down. Had the momentum been kept up in the years 1977 to 1979, the country would not have been in the state we found last year when the G.N.P. fell by about 4.5 per cent.

Since several hon. Members have spoken of the performance for 1977 to 1979, it is worthwhile to compare the results of the policies for the three years, 1974 to 1977 with the results of the policies of the Janata Party and Lok Dal Governments in the succeeding three years. You have probably heard the figures. But I give them again for the record. You will notice that where we needed increase, that is in the actual growth of the G.N.P. it came down from 4.1 per cent to 3.3 per cent, the industrial growth rate from 6.7 in 1974-77 to 3.2 in 1977-80, the growth rate of exports (at current prices) from 26.8 to 7.8 in 1977-80. The growth rate of the index of agricultural production came down from 1.7 in 1974-77 to 0.8 in 1977-80; and where we needed a decrease, for instance in the wholesale price index–counting 1970-71 equals 100 on a point to point basis–from 5.2 it rose to 8.8 in 1977-80. The growth in consumer price index–March to March basis rose from 5 per cent to 6.2 per cent.

The World Bank report was cited with great flourish in referring to the performance of the fiscal year 1976-79–a vain attempt to show how much was done by the Janata Party. This document was prepared by the World Bank staff and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Bank's Executive Directors. Perhaps the hon. Member was under the impression that the figures he read out referred only to the Janata Party and Lok Dal period. Actually, in World Bank parlance, this term "fiscal period 1976-1979" includes the period 1975-76, 1976-77 as also 1977-78 and 1978-79. In these four years, the highest growth rate was in 1975-76, which was 9.6 per cent. I have earlier mentioned what happened in 1979-80 to the growth rate, i.e. it slumped by minus 4.5 per cent. This same World Bank report states that the stabilisation measures taken in 1975 brought the severe inflation of that period under control. We do not want, nor is there need, to quote from the World Bank reports or for that matter any other report prepared by a foreign agency, as our Socialist and Marxist members seem so keen to do. The facts of our achievements speak for themselves. What is the fact of the achievements of Janata Party and Lok Dal Governments ? During those three years, the rate of growth works out to 3.3 per cent, which is less than the trend of growth rate of 3.5 per cent and lower than the average annual growth rate of 4.1 per cent during the three years preceding the Janata-Lok Dal rule. Even the 3.3 per cent growth rate during 1977 to 1979 was made possible only by the long-term policies followed and the momentum created by my earlier Government, as I stated at the beginning.

Inflation, Sir, is the main subject of conversation everywhere. The current Economic Survey gives figures which show how we have brought down the inflation rate from last year. Obviously we have not yet been able completely to reverse the trend set by the last few years. However, the price situation has somewhat improved.

It was alleged by one hon. Member that India's rate of inflation is the highest in the world. I do not know from what source the hon. Member gets his information. According to the latest IMF International Financial Statistics, the increase in consumer price indices in India from December, 1979 to September, 1980 was 7.5 per cent. I should like to give

the House some comparative figures. They are: Korea 24.3 per cent, Mexico 22.5 per cent, Pakistan 14.2 per cent, U.K. 12.8 per cent, Philippines 11.2 per cent, Indonesia 9.8 per cent, USA 9.5 per cent and India, as I mentioned earlier, 7.5 per cent. However, this is no satisfaction to us and even though it is extremely difficult to insulate our economy from international inflationary pressures, we are trying hard to keep prices from rising. But some items like oil, as everybody knows, are not in our control.

On our return to Government, we gave priority to halt the drift and to initiate new programmes to sustain economic development. The main thrust of Government policy is to increase production. In agriculture, we must expand irrigation, provide quality seeds and chemical inputs and strengthen extension services. The following figures speak for themselves. Fertiliser consumption in 1979-80 was 5.2 million tonnes. In 1980-81-the figure is provisional–5.6 million tonnes. Area under high-yielding varieties in 1979-80 was 35.2 million hectares and in 1980-81, 48 million hectares. Institutional credit for agriculture by co-operatives and banks has gone up from Rs. 2,550 crores to Rs. 2,990 crores.

Industrial performance in 1980-81 was much better than in 1979-80. We have taken steps to ensure better utilisation of installed capacity, remove restraints on production, raise limits on investments on small-scale units, ancillaries and tiny units.

Performance within each sector of the infrastructure was closely monitored by the Special Coordination Cell, problems were identified and better coordination effected. As a result of which the industrial growth rate improved from 1.4 per cent in 1979-80 to 4 per cent in 1980-81. Electricity generation (as the percentage over previous year) improved from 2.2 per cent to 6 per cent. Coal production improved from 106.9 to 115.0 million tonnes.

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Cargo handling by major ports (from April to Novermber) improved from 480 lakh tonnes to 510 tonnes.

I was told that for some unknown reasons the word 'export' was regarded almost as a bad word by the previous Government. So we had to take major initiatives to rescue it from stagnation.

The public distribution system has been strengthened. The off-take figures show that rice was 3.28 million tonnes in 1979-80 whereas in 1980-81 it was 4.34 million tonnes. In wheat, improvement has not been very much. But still it is an improvement from 5.14 million tonnes to 5.9 million tonnes.

During 1980-81, 40,000 fair price shops were opened mostly in rural areas.

It was amusing to hear that credit was being taken by Opposition parties for securing higher sugar cane prices. Actually, this was made possible only by our implementation of rational sugar pricing and distribution policies. This policy brought the total sugar production upto what is the highest in the last five years, 29 lakh tonnes till 7-2-1981. Those who created the gigantic sugar muddle in 1979 can hardly take credit for this reversal of the trend.

We prefer to help the *kisan* rather than enter into competition in shouting slogans of sympathy from him. When I said that 25 per cent of the Plan outlay would be set apart for farmers, I meant it. The level of investment for agriculture, rural development, irrigation and special area development, which benefits rural areas, is indeed of that order.

The other repetitive theme of a particular party is that of the import of foodgrains to build buffer stocks during 1974-77. I dealt with this comprehensively in my reply to the President's Address last year when I pointed out that the buffer stocks could not have been built but for the higher procurement of foodgrains by our Government. Please remember that it was our Government which was responsible for the policy of buffer stocking as an important factor of managing inflation and an instrument to provide essential commodities at reasonable rates to weaker sections of the society. For our part we intend to continue these policies. It is wholly wrong to accuse us of slowing down procurement. We are following it up. Already the procurement of rice in kharif 1980-81 has exceeded 4.7 million tonnes, as against 3.6 million tonnes in the whole kharif year of 1979-80. But West Bengal which has had a very good harvest, I hear, has procured much less than it can and should do. I hope this is not according to some plan of theirs.

We have also been accused of depleting our foreign exchange reserves. May I remind hon. Members that in 1966 the position was really bad. Our reserves started accumulating from 1975 onwards in a big way, mainly due to bigger export efforts in the earlier years and increases in remittances from Indians abroad. But the reserves are not built for their own sake. They give us a cushion to manage the balance of payments problem, and should be used when necessary to finance imports, especially when they rise sharply, as in this year, because of the increase in the prices of POL products. The figures for POL imports are as follows: 1978-79 Rs. 1,677 crores ; 1980-81 Rs. 5,600 crores (estimated). Against this increase in imports of about Rs. 4,000 crores for only one item, our draw down of foreign currency assets is expected to be only about Rs. 400 crores.

For a country's growth, the infra-structure is of the utmost importance. A sad but inescapable fact is that the infra-structure, including the public sector, was carelessly neglected. The following is the position:—The growth rate in electricity generation in utilities only in 1974—77 was 9.8 per cent. In 1977-80 it went down to 5.9 per cent. The growth rate of production of coal and lignite, which was 8.8 per cent in 1974-77, went down to 0.6 per cent in 1977-80. The growth rate in railway traffic in tonne kilometres was 9.6 per cent in 1974—77 which went down to 0.2 per cent in 1977-80. The growth rate in the production of finished steel was 15.6 per cent in 1974—77, which went down to minus 4.6 per cent in 1977-80. This is from the Economic Survey.

In our scheme of things, the public sector has a special place. Its working has improved and we expect it to overcome the inertia of 1979-80 and do as well and even better than in the period of 1974-77. The average pre-tax profit of public sector undertakings in 1974-77 was Rs. 316 crores. In 1977-80 it went down to Rs. 190 crores.

I am glad that industrial labour has responded positively to the measures we have taken so far. The number of man-days lost on account of labour problems in 1978 was 23.84

million; the provisional figure for 1980 is 12.91 million. But some people can't leave well alone. Attempts are being made to misguide labour and to vitiate the favourable industrial relations' situation. I appeal to the responsible sections of labour leadership not to allow themselves to be misled but to help us to serve the long-term interest of workers, which lies in increased production and in a sound and stable economy.

Family planning is indeed very vital for the whole world and specially in our circumstances. It is in this area that we have had the most crippling set back in the last year. Our Party and Government have never advocated compulsory methods, and we have considered the programme not merely as a measure of population control but for healthier families and the general well-being of our people. One hon. Member said and I fully support him, that this programme not only needs all-out effort by the Government but full co-operation of all the sections of the people, regardless of party or other considerations.

A rather feeble effort was made to project that outlays on science and technology were poor compared to what the Janata Party Government had provided. Of course, theirs was a Plan, as I said yesterday, that never was, because it was not approved by them. We all know what sort of interest that Government had taken in science and technology; and the consequent frustration of our scientists and technologists. Were not the achivements of our science denigrated in public, especially in so far as our peaceful nuclear experiment was concerned? It was an odd coincidence, and I want to make it very clear that for this I am not blaming either the then Government or our scientists, but it was strange coincidence that even the Bkaskara they sent up into space refused to send back information. It is a dark chapter in the history of our science and technology. I assure the House that we have the greatest commitment to science and technology and that our outlays on plan and non-plan expenditure will be significant as well as result-oriented. We shall continue to give all support to our brilliant scientists and technologists.

The law and order situation is one which worries all, and I share that anxiety. But one must see the problem in perspective. During the last years of my previous regime, agitations were deliberately fostered, giving rise to a climate of violence. The elements responsible for this were permitted to operate unchecked and thereby gained respectability. Later, during the Janata Party/Lok Dal inter-regnum, caste and communal considerations came to the fore. The outcome is there for all to see—disregard for authority, demoralisation of law enforcement agencies, the politicalisation of government apparatus and heightened communal and caste tensions.

Now, while the Central and State Governments are taking measures to curb lawlessness, some parties have taken it upon themselves to encourage, if not foment, a variety of fresh agitations without the slightest regard to the damage caused to national life and national economy.

Each individual's or group's welfare depends on the total picture and the overall progress. And progress depends on the produce from our fields and factories. Progress depends on the functioning, quality and output of our schools, colleges, universities and other public and technological establishments.

Should any of us say or do anything to clog these wheels of progress and growth? I leave it to each one of you here in this House, and to the nation, to judge whether there are elements in our country who have incited and are inciting various sections. There are also those who have double talk of higher price to farmers and lower price to consumers—price-rise and anti-price rise about the same commodity. The attempt is to hamper production, by getting workers to stop or slow down work, by trying to paralyse the distribution system, to create tension and even a fear psychosis. Whatever the legitimacy or otherwise of various demands, is it in the national interest to give slogans like "RAASTA ROKO" or "RAIL ROKO" or "KAM ROKO".

An hon. Member complained of my not visiting all the places where disturbances occur. In this, I cannot totally ignore the advice of the local administration. Some situations, especially communal ones, become very tense and it is considered advisable to go only when there is relative calm. At other times going helps to restore confidence. On occasions one has noticed that frequent visits rekindle sorrowful memories and keep emotions on the boil, thereby delaying normalcy.

The agitation in Assam has been going on for a long time. The Government have adopted a most patient and constructive attitude. It is indeed a pity that this has not evoked adequate response from the leaders of the agitation. Now, a new element has been introduced—terrorism: the throwing of bombs. Such a development cannot be countenanced by any Government.

We have had prolonged consultations with the leaders of political parties on this issue. It is unfortunate that a political party which claims to be a national one has now chosen to come out in favour of an agitation, which has caused untold hardship to the people of Assam and the North-East, and considerable damage to the economy there as well as the national economy. Amongst those most upset are the plains and hill tribal people. However, Government will continue its efforts to find a solution acceptable to all concerned.

There was understandable disquiet regarding feelings of insecurity amongst minorities. My party and I have always stood for those who are weaker, either economically, socially or because of numbers. Hence we are committed to the protection of minorities whether religious or linguistic. By the way, yesterday while I was listening to, I do not think it was the Member who was speaking, I think it was somebody who was interrupting. This Member told a story about the Hindi language and how somebody had said in Bombay—

बस आती है कि आता है? जवाब था, 'आवत' है

which is the language spoken from my part of U.P. But it reminded me of a similar story.

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It is an old, pre-independence story. Two English officials, who were learning Urdu from different teachers were arguing among themselves. One said that this is a 'tashtari'. The other said "no, my teacher has said it is a 'rakabi'." So, they decided to consult the bearer. The bearer said:

"हुजूर, हम तो इसको पलेट कहते हैं।"

One of the measures to foster communal harmony is the revival of the National Integration Council. Even though some persons refuse to join the Council, we hope that these deliberations will lead to useful results.

Yesterday, I heard there was criticism of my trip to Sravanbelgola. I went to Gometeshwara to pay homage to one of the great streams of Indian thought which has made deep impact on our history, on our culture and even on the methods adopted in our freedom struggle. Hon. Members know that Gandhiji was influenced by it and took up ideas of non-violence, non-possession and so on.

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Members are rightly exercised over the agitation in Gujarat. It is most distressing. My heartfelt sympathy is with all those who suffer and specially because there, those who are suffering are the weakest of our people. It is deplorable that some political parties are encouraging people to persist in this ill-advised movement. The Government have moral obligation and constitutional responsibility to advance the educational interests of the weaker sections of our society and in particular, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

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And that we must and that we intend to discharge this responsibility in full measure. Naturally we must see that merit does not suffer and that no section feels discriminated against. I hope that the more responsible sections of the society will help to bring about an early restoration of peace.

One Member made an astonishing remark about my Government's interference in educational institutions. The troubles in these bodies have been started by some Opposition parties meddling with students or terrorising the staff. It is in States run by one of these parties that there is real interference on a big scale to the detriment of the effective functioning of prestigious institutions—Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics and the Bose Institute.

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I am not talking about English, I am not talking about primary education. I am talking about the higher institutes of science.

I think, yesterday, it was said that various universities also have been interfered with, actually 6 out of 7, and, so far as I know the seventh university is Viswabharati which is a Central University. So, they cannot interfere with it.

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If it is not true, if they have not interfered, I shall accept it. I am not arguing about this. This is the information we have from the local people and those concerned with these bodies. (*Interruptions*) It is not from officers.

Similarly, I have had delegations from the Ramakrishna Mission complaining of the taking over of their polytechnics and schools. We know that this institution enjoys worldwide renown for its dedicated and fine educational, medical and relief work. (*Interruptions*). If these matters are wrong, I shall be the first person to accept and admit it.

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We feel it is confirmed information. But if it is not as I have already said I am prepared to look into it. There is no question of anybody resigning. I am not threatening the hon. Member.*

Now, I come to foreign policy. It seems to me that there are a few hon. Members who live in an imaginary world of their own. One spoke of the normalisation of relations with our neighbours during the Janata Party regime. History cannot be so easily distorted. It was my Government which took the first step for normalisation with Pakistan and the last major initiative in this direction was the Simla Agreement. Willingly giving up our river waters to the exent of damaging the Calcutta Port cannot be called normalisation. Good neighbourly relations can exist and grow only on the basis of reciprocity and mutual benefit. To this path we shall steadfastly adhere. We are as anxious as anybody. In fact, we think it is essential to have good relations with all our neighbours and we are doing everything possible for this. Another hon. Member spoke of lack of moral character. Strange words indeed from that party.

Events have demonstrated the rightness of our principled stands on various issues. The recent Non-Aligned conference has highlighted our balanced, constructive and active approach. The hon. Member, Shri Vajpayee's later statements to the Press revealed unsuspected depths of humour, perhaps unconsciously. How else can we explain his approbation of India's role at the Havana Summit ? Through the Janata Party-Lok Dal interregnum, the question among the Non-Aligned was, "India where are you?". In that period, various factors, including international factors, led to the weakening of the Non-Aligned Movement, and when I met world leaders in Salisbury and Belgrade, they wondered if the movement could survive or would it break up.

Thus, the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned countries was held at a time when perils abounded to world understanding and especially to non-aligned unity. There were propagandistic statements and homilies, and many did their best to sow suspicion among us. But every one recognises that in Delhi we were able to avert the danger of division and, to that extent increase our capacity to work for the lessening of international tensions. I must compliment our Foreign Minister and his team of officials for their patient, unruffled and untiring work to iron out points of difference and to persuade the antagonists to come closer. We now have a constructive initiative on the Iran-Iraq question. Regarding Afghanistan, leaders from all parts of the world who met me have commended as practical the Indian stand which seeks to help create an atmosphere for an early political solution.

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* Shri Satyasadhan Chakraborty.

Somebody asked, "publicly or privately". We have not changed our stand. It was made clear privately and publicly, in every possible forum.

Much is made of the fact that our Draft did not refer to one or two points. Now, it is clear that this was not a national draft, nor an elucidation of the Indian point of view, but a consensus paper. It was a compilation of various ideas aimed at evolving a common approach which become an excellent starting point and achieved maximum agreement.

As I said earlier, this does not mean that we have, at any time, changed our views or that they were not clearly made known to all. News from different quarters of international community informs us of a generally favourable reaction to the Conference. Here in this House the fact that we are criticised by opposing sections speaks volumes for our non-aligned stance. Anyhow, I do not expect impartial judgement from those who have made it their policy to attack me, whatever I do or say.

Our farmers are true patriots. They suffer and serve sweating in their fields, protecting our borders or through their sons who labour in factories. Their spirit of service and sacrifice has kept this nation going. Our Farmers' Rally was indeed an impressive and inspiring event. It gave farmers from all parts of the country, even from the remotest areas in the...(*Interruptions*)

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It was not a government function, Sir.* But when anything takes place on this scale, it is important to the nation.

It gave our farmers from all parts of the country, even from the remotest areas in the North and North-East, opportunity to come together and demonstrate Indian unity in spite of great distance and diversities. It gave them the feeling of participation in the larger national effort.

Observers were especially impressed by the exemplary behaviour and discipline of such massive numbers, unprecedented at any time anywhere in the world. This should be a source of pride to all Indians.

Our working classes have always shown a high sense of patriotism more so during difficult times and I do sincerely hope that they will act with patience and restraint and do nothing to hamper production in factories or work in offices. Within the means available, the Government have been always anxious to do justice to all sections of people, and shall continue to do so. But we cannot ignore the poorest amongst the poor who call for immediate attention. The better of people cannot be secured unless the weaker sections are made stronger. There is no or rather should not be rivalry between any section.

My speech would be incomplete without a word of appreciation of our Armed Forces. The entire country admires the manner in which they serve and sacrifice for our security

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* Replying to Shri Amar Roy Pradhan's remark, "I want to know whether it was a Government rally or not."

and in times of peace bring relief to victims of various calamities. We remember also our Ex-servicemen.

As I have said earlier, it is not my desire to score debating points or to continue an endless discussion on the past. Today's world moves much too fast to allow us that luxury. I have no quarrel with the Opposition. I wish them well. They have somehow to criticise the Government which we do not mind. Sometimes the criticism is theatrical and sometimes tends to gimmickery. Perhaps they think that this will help them. They are the best judges of what they should do. I am more concerned with what we and our Party do and we shall not allow any one to divert our attention from basic problems. I have repeatedly appealed for and offered cooperation. I am sorry to say that the response has been more towards confrontation. Opposition parties most of them have trod the path of confrontation all these years. Can we not give a trial to cooperation and discuss matters with cordiality ? I doubt if any one disputes the view that the situation, in various ways, in and around our country is serious. The future is already upon us : All countries are faced with hard decisions. We have no soft options. This situation demands a concerted and stupendous endeavour which can only be achieved by constructive cooperation from hon. Members, from political parties, from farmers and workers, form professionals and intellectuals, from women and from youth, in fact, from all our people. If we can consider our problems in that larger context, in the context of the nation's problems and difficulties and international situation, Sir, I have no doubt that this country has the strength to overcome these obstacles and to march forward towards socialism, towards a better life for our people by solving their many problems. This cooperation I seek from the hon. Members of all sides of the House. I commend the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address.

Overall Government Performance*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, and hon. Members, once again the House has debated the President's Address.

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One always expects a great deal from these debates and somehow one is disappointed. Reading the records of the contributions made, one cannot help feeling rather sorry about the irresponsibility in some speeches and even animus from the Opposition benches. One expects from the member sitting opposite, to make light of the weightiest matters, but, even so, some of the statements which he and others have made were truly astounding : that we have wasted money on the South-South dialogues, that our public distribution system does not cover even a microscopic minority in the country, and that our schools and universities are producing only morons. I leave it to the other Members of the House to come to their own conclusions on this last item specially.

But the main target of attack was our 20-Point Economic Programme and this revealed the Opposition at its most pathetic and pathological level. I should like to put a few straight questions to them. Which of the points do you disapprove ? Irrigation ? Greater production of pulses and oilseeds ? National Rural Employment Programme ? Are you against land ceilings and redistribution of the surplus land ? Are you against enforcement of minimum wages for agricultural labourers ? Are you against the rehabilitation of bonded labour or the accelerated programmes for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes ? Do you not want the rural drinking programme and allotment of house sites, and so on ? I need not cover the entire list. It is apparent that those who criticize the 20-Point Programme lack the courage of being honest with themselves. Or, else, they are so consumed by hatred of the Congress and the Government that they do not hesitate to oppose even necessary programmes which serve the people. A few Opposition Members called the 20-Point Programme a mere 'mantra'. But would they have been so upset, had we been paying lip service to the programme ? Perhaps they would have welcomed that. But they realise how earnest we are. They know also of the enthusiasm the programme has generated amongst the people. The earlier 20-Point Programme made a tangible impact and that is why the people today welcome the revised one. It sets about purposely to attain some specific goals in clearly demarcated areas. It embodies some of the urgent and essential objectives, social and economic. It stresses our commitment to the security, welfare and uplift of the Scheduled

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *R.S. Deb.*, 1 March, 1982, cc. 390-402.

Castes and Scheduled Tribes. It gives the Plan a sharper focus and because of the 20-Point Programme, the Plan itself has been able to get larger allocations.

Hon. Member, Shri Piloo Mody, accused us with his usual flourish : Do you know where you are going, he asked ? Theatricals apart, we do know. And talking of theatre, I am reminded of a film that I saw some years ago called "The Party". In that a very famous actor—now dead–Peter Sellers was acting the part of a rather lovable Indian tyring to rescue a damsel in distress. The villain of the piece caught hold of him and shook him and asked : Who do you think, you are ? He replied : In India we do not think who we are; we know who we are. (*Interruptions*)

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Well, the answer in one word, Mr. Mody,* is : Forward! Towards a stronger, Self-Reliant India, in which the individual has more freedom and feels more cared for, an India in which democracy, secularism and social justice are safe and more real to the people. (*Interruptions*) We feel deeply concerned about the problems of the minorities. They play such an important part in all spheres of national activity. The Government and the majority community and this differs in different States must consider it their special responsibility to safeguard all who are weaker for any reason. We are going on the path of democracy, secularism and socialism, in the direction along which the Congress was taking the country under Jawaharlal Nehru's leadership from the first day of our freedom. That has been the direction that my party and I have followed since.

When, the hon. Member and his co-workers—or, may I say, non-co-workers ?—(*Interruptions*)—were in office, the country did not have a direction. It seems to be meandering this way and that. Now we are back on the road.

But this has taken two years of unremitting toil. In many States we have not yet regained the old tempo, but the infrastructures for power, coal, railways, etc. are at least in working order. Over and above this repair job, we have, with foreti ought and prudence, also been building up the infrastructure for immediate minimum gr wth in agriculture, namely, irrigation and fertilisers production. Any country should be proud of its success in adding five million hectares in just two years to the area under irrigation and increasing the petroleum production by 60 per cent within a single year. Only a small section of our parliamentarians don't seem to appreciate the magnitude of this achievement. However, let me assure our technologists and engineers that the nation as a whole applauds what they have done, and are doing, to enable our farmers and our workers to produce more. The need of the hour is production. Only thus can there be more to be distributed among larger numbers of people. Admittedly, the public distribution system does not yet cover the entire population, but that is the aim towards which we are progressing. At the same time, it would not be correct to say that it reaches only a microscopic minority, as stated by an hon. Member. There are 2.98 lakh fair price shops of which more than 60,000 were

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* Replying to Shri Piloo Mody who said, "Madam, if I come to you tomorrow morning, will you please tell me : Where are we going....."

opened in the last two years. On an average, one million tonnes of foodgrains are distributed through them every month. They also handle 65 per cent of the quantity of sugar produced which is distributed as levy sugar, and about 20 per cent of edible oil.

It is also not right to say that we have abandoned the Food-for-Work Programme. In fact, we have improved upon it and removed the defects which were pointed out in evaluation and by audit, and are now implementing it as a National Rural Employment Programme. To remove malpractices by contractors which had been noticed in the original programme, the N.R.E.P. has decided that there will be no contractors and that the work will be done through Zila Parishads, etc. The State Governments have also been asked to ensure that 40 per cent of the cost of the project is in the form of materials so that the asset is durable. Sixty per cent will be given as wages. This will ensure that employment is not diluted. Under the food component, one kilogram of grain will be provided per worker per day. For this, allotments of foodgrains are being made from the central pool. State Governments have also been asked to procure foodgrains. The Sixth Plan aims at generating employment of 350 to 400 million mandays per year under this programme, and we expect to achieve this target. The 1982-83 Plan provides a total of 380 crore of rupees for this programme as against 360 crore last year.

Another section of the Opposition benches accused us of encouraging the multinationals in the name of production and swerving from our path. There is absolutely no truth in this charge. We are not given special concessions to multinationals. Also the sudden and new-found love for our old path is touching and inexplicable. But logic is not the strong point of our self-styled leftists. Multinationals do borrow from public financial institutions, but not to the detriment of other small and medium users.

Several Members have spoken of inflation and the burden it imposes on the people. I do not want to repeat the figures which quite clearly demonstrate our success in bringing down the rate of inflation. Reduction in wholesale prices is bound to get reflected in reduction of consumer prices although usually there is a time lag. If we succeed in keeping the rate of inflation and wholesale prices in check, this will also restrain inflation in the retail price index. It is obvious that inflation causes hardship. That is exactly why we have made control of inflation one of our prime policy objective. Considering the state of the economy with its rampant inflation, that we inherited on our return to office, our two years' effort has made an impressive impact. However, I should like to emphasise the major aspect of our anti-inflationary policy.

In most capitalist countries, inflation is sought to be controlled by creating unemployment. Obviously that cannot be our policy. To redress the hardships of the common people, we must control prices and at the same time augment employment opportunities. There must be substantial growth in production which will increase the supply of goods and thus reduce prices, and provide opportunities for further development and the generation of investment and employment. Our anti-inflationary policies are consistent with our development policies. This is the basis of our current economic policies and also of our Budget. We have tried to ensure maximum thrust to planned development. Every effort has been made to find the resources to finance a considerable increase in the size of

the Annual Plan and at the same time to reduce non-developmental expenditure to the minimum, so that the deficit remains within the barest minimum and does not create further inflationary pressures. Within the Plan allocation also, the maximum emphasis has been on programmes providing support and generating income for the poorer sections in accordance with our 20-Point Programme.

Hon. Members will have noted that allocation for the development plan at the Centre has been increased from Rs. 8,619 crore to Rs. 11,000 crore, a 27.6 per cent rise. Important segments benefiting from this increase are the National Rural Employment Programme, the integrated rural development and allied programmes and programmes for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. A great deal of pre-Budget propaganda had been caried on that the Government would be dictated to by outside elements. Even some hon. Member has said so. This is not very becoming of Members of this august Parliament of a proud country. Yet, what do we see ? It is the business circles which are most disappointed and most critical of the Budget. The Budget shows the full awareness of the urgent tasks before the nation is welfare of the weakest, employment, stimulation of production, containment of inflation and safeguarding of our security, each one is a formidable task in itself. But we are determined to achieve all of them.

It is in line with this policy that we have decided to make the current year the Year of Productivity. Every economic activity must get the maximum out of potential created. We shall provide all the support necessary to increase productivity in industry and in agriculture, in the service sector and in the infrastructue. I hope everybody will participate in this national effort.

How can Bharat Bandhs be consistent with increased productivity ? How can greater productivity be sustained if the essential services are disrupted time and again ? I have always upheld the rights of our labour and trade union movement. But they also have social obligations. A break-down in any single essential service can paralyse the entire national economy and obviously those who suffer most are usually the poorest and weakest sections. A strike in these industries cannot be taken lightly by anyone who is interested in the country's development.

Some hon. Members have referred to the problem of increasing real wages. The per capita income in our country has been increasing consistently. Since the beginning of Planning until now it has increased by about 50 per cent. And this is at a time when the population itself is up by about 90 per cent. Surely it should be clear to everybody that increase in productivity is the first condition necessary for any increase in the real wages of our working people. The working class itself is gradually finding out who its real friends are. It is getting tired of being exploited for partisan ends by political leaders who do not care for their welfare or for the solidarity of the working class. It is because of their realisation, that the mighty display planned for January 19th turned out to be a damp squib.

An hon. Member complained that federalism was disappearing. And he spoke of centralised finance and administration. This is an old and oft-repeated argument. The one difference is that generally, previously, it was voiced by Leftists of West Bengal and Kerala.

This time it has come from a Member of another party. The powers of the Centre and the States have been fairly well demarcated. When we have to run a modern State, national finance as a whole have to be monitoned with care. In the name of State autonomy a State cannot run up overdrafts and other improvident policies which will have reprecussions on other States, and this is true irrespective of what party might be in power in a State.

It has been alleged that the Government does not care for science. This is quite preposterous. The House knows that scientists as a whole feel at home with this Government and the Government is fully aware of its responsibilities towards science and scientists. It is true that we cannot provide them all the facilities they need, nor match the salary scales abroad. A certain amount of brain-drain occurs not only from our country but even from Europe to the United States. But a large number of very able and distinguished scientists do stay and work in India at considerable sacrifice of pay and comfort for themselves and their families. What actuates them is the love of the country and the desire to serve our people. The achievements of our scientists in various fields are a matter of pride. The President's Address has mentioned the work in Space, and the latest expedition to Antarctica. Some M.Ps. were able to meet the leader of the expedition at the Consultative Committee meeting. Later this evening I am meeting the entire Expedition and, I am sure, you would like me to convey to them your congratulations.

Another hon. Member thought that the Assam problem had not been mentioned in the right perspective. I have tried always to see it from the national perspective. We have deplored its being viewed from a narrow view point. We have shown great patience and shall continue to do so keeping in mind the political and humanitarian considerations as well as constitutional obligations.

Another Member charged that land-reforms had not been mentioned. I might point out that land reforms form an important element in the 20-Point Programme. In fact, I can show that we intend to implement them with determination. A disturbing development in the late 70s was a very large number, thousands in each State, of petitions in high courts and lower courts against the actual distribution made. I seek the co-operation of all parties in dealing with this problem.

One hon. Member spoke of increase in crimes against women. This is a matter which is of grave concern to us all. Instances of rape and instances of dowry murder are a blot on the fair name of our country. The old restraints imposed by family and by religion are weakening. This is happening all over the world. To point this out is not to defend. Our columnist and sometimes our cartoonists have a habit of pouring scorn on what is called the global phenomena. But the modern media have had an unsettling effect on social life. Crimes against women are particularly heinous form of permissiveness. The administration must deal with these much more firmly. At the same time, I feel that public-spirited people should help in arousing the public to combat such barbarous mentalities.

There is a certain erosion of values. To some extent this is understandable when an entire nation moves from one age to another. You can imagine the uncertainty that creeps in. I feel strongly that we should not get alienated from our roots, that we should find a

way of linking the old and the new as we have done through the ages. Our basic values have not changed. We must have progress but we should remain rooted in those of our values which are timeless, which have given this country strength and sustained us in times of difficulties and disturbance.

I am glad to note that one hon. Member spoke on environment and forest, even though he did so only to criticise us. I can legitimately take some credit for making the country environment-conscious and I am most anxious to make environment conservation an integral part of development. Environmentalists the world over consider me as one of themselves and come to me when they have a problem or suggestion. Countless are the instances in which I have personally intervened. There can be no two opinions about the danger of unscientific felling of trees and destruction of forests to the future and to our present. In the last few years we have initiated a series of measures and procedures to prevent the misuse of forests. We have established a Department of Environment and we have made environmental clearance a necessary pre-condition of approval of development projects. But many State Governments and Central agencies are impatient about these restrictions. I shall not willingly sacrifice the nation's long-term good for immediate gain but for this I do need people's co-operation. The pressure of population and of development is very great on the States and on the local people and frankly I am finding it exceedingly difficult to convince them that if today they do not look after their forests or wild life and so on, later on it is those very people living in those areas who will suffer the most. For instance, if you kill all the fish, what are the fishermen going to do later on ? They have to ensure that supply remains. And it is the same when people go out to get skins or when they want to put up projects in areas which all over the world are considered to be unique and well worth preserving and in fact, essential to be preserved.

I have already referred to the remark of an Opposition Member regarding the New Delhi South–South Consultations. A more thoughtless observation on this subject is hard to imagine. It reveals total ignorance of the nature of the world economic crisis and the burdens it casts on developing countries. The meeting was useful. It was a step towards greater co-operation between developing countries, which is essential as a basic for North-South talks. Our initiative was welcomed by all.

The International scene is beset by two major dangers—the menace of war and widening disparity between the developed and the developing nations. These appear overwhelming and almost intraceable. But I do believe that if we go about it with confidence and clarity, there is no problem to which a solution cannot be found. Problems are not solved by throwing up one's hands in despair but by patient, persistent and dogged efforts. India is known for its determination in the non-aligned movement, in the Group of 77 and other causes. People expect us to play the part that befits the country of our size. We do not wish to assume any leadership role. I feel that most of the world's troubles arise from this desire of leadership. We wish to work in partnership and we shall always be with our colleagues in Asia, Africa and Latin America, ready to support and serve their cause which is also ours. We do not seek leadership; yet the world looks to us, some with respect and some with apprehension because of the ideals which we so strongly espouse.

The hon. Members should be concerned with Pakistan is natural. We want Pakistan to live in peace with us. We want it to be reconciled to itself and to us. We shall not be bamboozled or provoked by what they do in their own country. We shall continue our effort to improve relations with all our neighbouring countries including Pakistan and China, keeping our eyes open to whatever they do. As the hon. Members know, when the Pakistani Foreign Minister was here a short while ago, I offered them a treaty of friendship and co-operation.

Mr. Deputy Chiarman, most hon. Members know—even those who might criticise us—that ours is a Government which will safeguard the nation's interest in every way, its economic interest, its security and its internal fabric. The President's Address refers to immediate problems which concern us and outlines the strength that is being built up. I do not claim that these achievements, present or future, are my achievements. As I reiterate time and again, they are the achviements of our farmers, industrial and other workers, our scientists, technologists and Defence service. Let us give them more support, more courage, more hope.

Many people in the world are saying that the "time is out of joint" and certainly the situation needs all of us; a concerted effort, nationwide and even worldwide, to set it right. Let no temporary gain or convenience divert us from it. But with due apologies to Shakespeare, may I say that it is not time which is out of joint. Time goes merrily on its way; the seasons come and go. It is we humans who are alienating ourselves from the rhythm of nature. Instead of viewing the world and nature as one whole, and our myriad problems in their totality, we have put up all kinds of barriers, national and international. Concentration on fragments creates new problems and imbalances. In the name of progress, we do not hesitate to destroy what has so far sustained life on earth. What is required is first of all the correct mental attitude and then action on it. Action which overrides any narrow political or other considerations.

Sir, I commend the President's Address for the acceptance of the House and request those who have tabled amendments to withdraw them.

A Review of Government Policies*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, a new year has begun and once more we have debated the motion on the President's Address. Parliament is a place of debate, but on some occasions, and specially on this particular occasion, I had hoped that Members of the Opposition would try to rise, even though temporarily, above their petty preoccupations and use the occasion for serious discussion on basic issues and national problems and preoccupations. Am I wrong in thinking that on the whole the contributions to this debate have been disappointing? Hon. Members of the Opposition have indulged in their oft-repeated favourite criticisms and petty prejudices. They have a right to do so. That is why they are here and they would not be what they are if they did not.

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I have always kept above narrowness. In the earlier years, I used to ask the Opposition to place an alternative programme before the nation. I no longer do so. The country has stopped expecting this of them for no one now credits them with the capability of doing so. The country has realised that they have no interest in an alternative programme and are concentrating merely on the weakening, and if possible, removal of the Government, even though the Government has been democratically elected.

One Opposition Member derided the President's call for co-operation among parties on the larger problems before our country. I do not think I need to repeat that Government takes this call most seriously. The hon. Member attached a number of pre-conditions. One was that, I should give an assurance removing all doubts and apprehensions–these are his words, I think–about threats to the Constitution and the basic structure and about the freedom of the judiciary and the Press. The only condition he forgot to attach was that he would support the Government only if his own people were in it !

I sympathise with the Opposition in the peculiar predicament they find themselves in, this year. With no shortage to cry about-even onions have not obliged them to shed tears–with no 'galloping inflation' to protest against, it has not been easy for the Opposition to find firing targets. Out of sheer despair, they have to fall back on their stale phrases of 1977 and earlier and resurrect the dead bogies of 'dangers' to democracy, to the judicial system and electoral process, etc. Little do they realise that in doing this, they merely expose

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address. *L.S. Deb.*, 1 March, 1982, cc. 372-84.

the contradictions in their own logic and in some cases, the hollowness of their political pronouncements.

Sir, we have proved our adherence to democracy, the sovereignty of the people and the sanctity of Parliament. I did not change my views when I was expelled from this House immediately after having been duly elected by the people.

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On the contrary, the attitude to Parliament of some other persons has been oscillating, according to which side of the House they are sitting! The system is the same one which gave them a majority in 1977 and us in earlier elections as well as in 1980. But these very persons do not hesitate to launch extra-parliamentary agitations, advocating a change in the entire system. It is they who pose a threat to the system, not us, and certainly not me. Even now their theoreticians are busy advancing new agendas.

As for the judiciary, some harsh words were recently said about judges. They were not spoken by us but by self-appointed custodians of the judicial conscience. Why was this group angry ? Because the Supreme Court had upheld the Government's position on the appointment and transfer of judges. It seems that to these luminaries a judge is right only when he strikes down what has been passed by Parliament or done by Executive, and wrong on the occasions when he finds merit in national policies. This is not judicial balance. The danger to the judiciary comes from those who assign such a permanently negative role to the judiciary.

There have been stringent charges of our wanting to postpone election in West Bengal. Leaders of the ruling front and some friends here seem to have little to do except issue statements every day that the Centre wishes to introduce President's Rule. Perhaps, this is wishful thinking on their part. All the democratic parties in the State, some of whom in this House are represented on the benches opposite have asked for the electoral rolls to reflect the correct state of the electorate. This is the basic condition for establishing the credibility of the electoral system. And to ask for this–and that too following established legal and statutory procedure–becomes "anti-democratic" in the twisted logic of some people.....

We have also heard a great deal about the postponement of the bye-election in Garhwal. Opposition Members are at their worst on this issue, displaying contradiction and blatant absurdity. When the Election Commission ordered the postponement of the bye-election on the ground that police force from outside has been inducted into the State and other such reasons, the Opposition hailed the decision as truly democratic and a great vindication of the sanctity of the electoral system. But when on a subsequent occasion the same Election Commission postponed the bye-election on the ground that arrangements for an orderly pool had to be ensured, the same Opposition Members shout hoarse about dangers to democracy and the electoral system. Does this mean, Sir, that democracy is safe and the election system retains its sanctity only when decisions of the Election Commission go in favour of the Opposition Parties? The Opposition hails one decision and wails at another, and on both occasions blames the Government ! (*Interruptions*)

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If you are short of sticks to beat the Government with, please do not select those which break in your hands and hurt you more.

The growth of violence is indeed cause for great concern to us all. Caste tensions increased in the late seventies with the coming to power of certain persons and groups who have been known to think along, and encourage, caste divisions. The Congress has always believed in dealing fairly with every group and region within a State and in holding them together. The Congress as a party has repudiated the theories of class-war and caste-war and has stood for the reconciliation of conflicting interests. This was Gandhiji's approach, Jawaharlal Nehru's approach and that of Sardar Patel and Maulana Azad. This is our inheritance. I do not deny that some Congressmen might occasionally have also abetted caste tension, but this we deplore and take action against. We try our utmost to give an equal chance to all the various groups which constitute our nation.

We have a special duty to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Their safety and welfare are basic to our very system. We are determined to help them as well as all those who, because of poverty, have been denied opportunities and their rightful place in society.

The Address has been criticised for not referring to Mizoram or the rest of the North-East. The nation has been dealing with understanding and firmness with misguided elements in that region, who are indulging in underground and hostile activities. We are trying all possible methods to bring them into the mainstream of national politics and economic development. Indeed, in the last two years, the tempo of development in all of the North-East has greatly improved.

I do not want to go into many details, but hon. Members will be interested to know that the total allocation in the Sixth Plan for the five States and two Union Territories is Rs. 2,387 crore. Central assistance is over 80% and the *per capita* outlay in the North-East Rs. 1,393, as compared to a much lower figure elsewhere. The allocations for 1982-83 are substantially higher than those in 1981-82. Additionally, the North-East Council has a Sixth Plan provision of Rs. 340 crore.

As for Mizoram, we have had long talks with Mr. Laldenga. Some of his conditions no Government could accept. The situation in the region is under control. I am deeply grieved that tragic incidents, like the recent ambush of security forces in Manipur do occur. I am sure the House will join me in expressing sympathy with the families who have lost their loved ones and bread winners.

As regards Assam, the House is aware of the patience and consideration we have shown. We shall not waver from reason, compassion and constitutional responsibility, even if the other side does not fully reciprocate. The President could have made a stronger reference, but we did not want to say anything that might mar the climate for negotiations. Some people are becoming restive and even accusing me of drift. But we shall persevere with patience. Most Opposition parties are now associated with the discussion and are aware of the complexity of the problem.

Many references have been made to corruption in public life. Some Opposition speakers are trying to create the impression that corruption has become a problem only now, and that the corrupt are only in the Government. I earnestly appeal to all sections of the House, whether in the Government, in the ruling party, or in the Opposition, to deal with this issue without partisan bias or political motives. Corruption is corruption, whether practised by a person in power, or person aspiring for power, or any other, and we have to fight it at all fronts and at all levels. There is no sense in taking a 'holier than thou' attitude, focussing on certain individuals and instances. Corruption anywhere will pollute the whole system and must be treated as a symptom of a wider malady. I should like to assure the House and the nation that we shall continue our relentless war against this evil at all levels and at all times. I appeal for the co-operation and support of everyone in arousing the moral consciousness and strength of the whole nation in this task.

A greater proportion of the Address this time was devoted to the economic situation. Rightly so, we want the people to know what has been achieved in the last 26 months through sustained, unremitting, even grim toil, to put the economy back on its feet. We have, at the same time, built capacity for further growth in the immediate future. Is it negligible to increase irrigation by 2.5 million hectares, as we have done in each of the last two years, and by the 3 million hectares we propose to do in each of the next three years ? Is it negligible to increase the production of petroleum by more than 60 per cent within a year ? Our engineers, our technologists, are building this country. All they need is comprehension, support and encouragement from the Government and the people. Ours is a Government which gives that support. Let us all be proud of these men and women–and of our farmers and our industrial workers–who are literally our nation-builders.

It is nonsense to make out that we are unsympathetic to the working class. Workers are beginning to understand who are their real friends and well-wishers. Are they the wildeyed Opposition politicians who exploit them for political ends, or we who are making every effort to help them towards a better future ? Wasn't this clear from the flop of what was pompously called Bharat Bandh ?

We have a mixed economy. The public sector occupies the commanding heights of the economy and serves our social objectives. It operates side by side with a developing and viable private sector which should find its prosperity also in working for the realisation of our social objectives. I can assure the House that my Government has not deviated from this basic policy. We are liberalising our economy but only in those areas where controls and restrictions were becoming counter productive. During the early years of our development many controls and restrictions were necessary to protect our relatively undeveloped weak economic base and nascent industry. Today our situation has changed. Our industry has become strong, our economy has become self–assured. We now compete with some of the most developed countries in major areas of economic activity. We can absorb the most sophisticated technology without deviating from self-reliance. The liberalisation of controls and regulations provide a positive support to our strategy of growth and development. Large houses now can operate in areas of our social priority, the core sector, in industries which generate export and in areas with the largest impact on economic

development and generation of employment. Similarly, foreign investment is welcome in areas of high technology, in consonance with our policy.

An hon. Member quoted certain statistics in a vain attempt to show that we are still where we were last year. The present trouble regarding our economy is indeed that in 1977-79 it was pushed back by several years. It has taken us all this time to get it back to its position in 1976-77. In many areas it has not yet regained its earlier buoyancy.

An hon. Member has referred to the per capita availability of cereals and pulses in 1980-81 as being 459.5 grams–or less than what was achieved in 1978-79. He did not tell the House that in 1975-76 the per capita availability was 453.3 grams. In 1979-80, it came down to 416·9 grams. However, I am not blaming the Government of which he was a distinguished member, for I know that there was drought at that time. But, also I do not have to apologise for the fact that within one year after our coming into office the per capita availability has been raised to 459.5 grams. What we have to realise is that availability figures will fluctuate from year to year because of droughts and weather conditions. But can any one deny that in the last 15 years, our cereal production has increased more than 70 per cent ?

We were also aksed why we had imported wheat even though we had a good harvest, and why prices had increased even though there was no further increase in international oil prices during the year. The reason is not far to seek and I have explained it earlier. Even though the grain production in 1980-81 was 130 million tonnes, it followed a very low harvest of 109.7 million tonnes in 1979-80. Stocks had been depleted and we exercised prudence and foresight in importing wheat at a time when world prices were very low to bring the buffer stock back to the required level of a minimum of 12 million tonnes.

As for prices, oil is not the only commodity we import. There are items such as fertilizers, edible oils, oil seeds and different kinds of raw materials required for domestic production. One must also remember that the consequences of international price levels do not cease operating.

Not only I, but knowledgeable people all over the world, will be amused by the accusation that we lack talent. Our talent is the talent to build, to know how to serve the people and to retain their confidence. It is indeed said that the only talent of the hon. Member and some of his colleagues is the talent to destroy, and to try to weaken the morale of our people. Even in this debate the words used were "The response will be dynamite!"

Can the National Security Act and the Productivity Year go together ? It was asked. I counter with another question. Can Bharat Bandhs bring productivity ? The accusations that Government is running after multinationals and giving freer rein to large business houses are just so many empty words. The revised Twenty-Point Programme has also been criticised. So was the previous one. The programme does give importance to production but not at the cost of social justice. A close and dispassionate examination of the 20-Point shows its fine balance between production and welfare. In fact, even a little clear thinking is enough to understand that there can be no welfare without production. I am

reminded of my father's words on the subject, in the early years of our independence when he said, "socialism without higher production would be a low-level poor socialism".

All countries-capitalist, communist and socialist–are stressing production today and with good reason. Regulations, whose only virtue is restriction on production, do not make us more socialist. We intend to pursue our all-out efforts to produce more oil, more electricity, more fertilizers, more foodgrains and more of the basic needs of our people.

Had we earlier produced more oil, the crisis of the seventies would not have hit us so badly. At that time there were many people on the opposition benches who gunned for Shri K.D. Malviya but they hit our self-sufficiency. If we do not even now move ahead swiftly, future crisis will find us more vulnerable.

Rapid progress now is essential. We should not hesitate to avail ourselves of whatever investments and technology we can secure. Our Government and our political system are strong enough, technologically and otherwise, not to allow our self-reliance to be mortgaged by outside funds and know-how.

This is what we call operation forward. The Janata Party's strategy was movement into the past. Ours is forward into the future. I do not know whether the communist parties want to go forwards or backwards.

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The strengthening of our economy and technology is particularly important because of the nature of the dangers which surround us. Some people seem incapable of realising the gravity of the present situation. Recently at a Conference I said that "if by any chance a nuclear warhead should sneeze, billions would suffer". This might happen even without Heads of Governments wanting it. Too many nuclear submarines are prowling around in too many areas. With the general increase of militancy all around, Europe has suddenly woken up to the peril it faces from the sum total of increasing armaments. But it is not Europe alone that is menaced. The strategic calculations and preparations of others increase the threat to us. That is why we have so persistently deplored the arming of Pakistan and the militarisation of the Indian Ocean.

Many of the amendments deal with Pakistan. A few weeks ago when the Foreign Minister of Pakistan visited Delhi for discussion, I said that pact or no pact India would not attack Pakistan. That sums up the principle and conciliatory policy we have always adopted in regard to Pakistan. Pakistan's policy became apparent again when, within a few days, its representative, speaking at the U.N. Human Rights Commission made untenable charges against India, bringing up Kashmir.

All this reveals Pakistan's obsession. Let us show them that we do not suffer from any such obsession about them or others. We cannot underrate Pakistan's potential for trouble, nor should we exaggerate it. It is ridiculous to charge me, who has gone so far in seeking friendship of being lukewarm in dealing with Pakistan's offer.

I am sure hon. Members realise that however, strenuous our efforts, our ultimate success will depend on improvement in the international economic environment within which we operate. Along with other developing countries, we have inherited an iniquitous economic order. I focussed attention on this in Melbourne and in Cancun and I am again taking the initiative in convening the New Delhi Consultations to strengthen the collective bargaining power of developing countries in securing justice and equity in the International economic system. We must pursue this with vigour.

Hon. Members, we are not an island. Even island today are not cut off. We are battered by the storms which arise in other parts of the World, be they economic, military or whatever. We cannot control events but we can prepare ourselves not to be overwhelmed by them. That is my philosophy as an individual and for my nation. Strength has never come from comfort or the smooth path but from the most strenuous of efforts, and as individuals and as a nation, we must aim not merely at economic progress, vital and urgent though that is, but at building men and women who cannot easily be swept from their moorings, men and women who can hold their own and keep their heads high in the face of adversity and be able to seek from it opportunity and success.

I appeal to the movers of the 766 Amendments, the largest number ever, to withdraw them. I commend the Motion to the acceptance of the House.

Thank you.

Looking for a New Breakthrough*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, a large number of Members have spoken on the President's Address. Some have made good points, others have repeated their pet theories and others again have aired their prejudices. I am not taking the names of one group or other or even of one individual or another not because I do not appreciate what some have said or object to the criticism of others, but only because it is not possible to take all names and to take just a few might be discriminatory. Anyhow I thank all for their participation in the debate.

In his Address, the President informs Parliament and the country about the state of the nation. This the Address has done with a high sense of responsibility and in a cogent, compact manner.

Some hon. Members have accused it of being unduly rosy and optimistic. Nobody claims that conditions are ideal or that we are satisfied with what has been achieved. But, on the whole, the Address is objective and presents a balanced view of strengths as well as of shortcomings. But it does certainly highlight, as I think it should, the nation's grit and achievement, in the face of tremendous difficulties.

Several hon. Members have talked of a decline in production in the agricultural and industrial sectors and the low rate in the growth of the economy during 1982-83, compared with the previous year. Agricultural production has been lower but industrial production has not fallen. There has been some decline in the overall growth rate but two important factors have to be borne in mind, firstly, the rapid deterioration in the international economic situation and secondly the unprecedented drought of 1982 in vast areas of our own country.

The Indian economy cannot be completely insulated from the international economic environment within which it has to operate. When world trade stagnates, our exports are also adversely affected. Aid is becoming increasingly costlier and more difficult to get. The whole world is passing through a period of economic turmoil marked by high rates of inflation and unemployment. Even in the industrially advanced countries the average rate of growth was only 1 per cent last year. The non-oil-exporting-developing countries were the worst hit, suffering from the inherent weaknesses of their own economies and also from the repercussions of recession in developed economies. During 1982, the inflation rate in non-oil-exporting-developing countries was as high as 35 per cent, and the average rate of growth only 1.8 per cent. In this year of all-round stagnation, India is one of the

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *L.S. Deb.*, 1 March, 1983, cc. 422-32.

very few countries which has managed to keep the annual rate of inflation at the low level of 2.8 per cent while sustaining a reasonably satisfactory rate of growth.

The growth rate of 2 per cent is less than that of the previous year, but here I come to the second point I made earlier which is that this growth rate has been achieved in a year of severe drought which affected 43 million hectares of land and 26 crore people. Our last drought was in 1979-80 when 38 million hectares of land and 22 crore people were affected. But if we compare the state of the economy now with that of the previous drought year, the House can judge between good and bad management. In a country like ours, heavily dependent on the monsoons, all that the Government can do in a year of monsoon failure is to try to mitigate its adverse impact through good management of the economy. This exactly what we did in 1982. That is how the country was saved from the debilitating impact of a great natural calamity.

In 1979-80, in spite of a comfortable situation in food stocks and foreign exchange reserves, prices were allowed to increase by nearly 22 per cent. By contrast, in the drought year of 1982 the price rise has been only 2.8 per cent. There was nothing fortuitous about it. In fact, prices had begun to rise sharply in the middle of 1982. But the Government moved quickly to control this trend through appropriate monetary measures, timely imports, increased supply of essential commodities and vigorous efforts for grains procurement. In fact, the procurement of rice and wheat in 1982 was higher than in the previous year and this helped the steady flow of foodgrains through the public distribution system. Again, in the previous drought year of 1979-80 the national income actually fell by 4.8 per cent. and industrial production by 1·4 per cent. By contrast, in the drought year 1982 there has been an increase in industrial production of 4.5 per cent and an increase in the national income of 2 per cent. What is more, improvements in infrastructure facilities–power coal, railway–were maintained, the tempo of investment has been increased and plan outlays augmented substantially. This is the difference between good and bad management.

I have never expected bouquets from the Opposition, but only political prejudice, and perhaps sheer habit will throw brickbats at such a record. On the economic front, the picture is neither illusory nor exaggerated, as an hon. Member has alleged.

An hon. Member regretted the inadequacy of grain stocks. On the 1st February, 1983 these stocks were 12.5 million tonnes. This is higher than the stocks in February 1981 or 1982. There are 2.76 lakh recognised fair-price shops, of which 78 per cent are in the rural areas, covering about 52 crore people. I do concede that the system is not perfect. It needs greater improvement. Whenever difficulties are brought to our notice, we rush stocks and try to remedy the situation.

Many hon. Members have spoken of the problems of their own States. Sir, this is hardly the forum where we can go into the specific problems of each different State. I know that States are facing difficulties. Recently we have sent some grain to Tamil Nadu as well as to some other States who asked for it.

Another Member thought that our success in checking prices was due not to our own efforts but because prices were falling all over the world. Frankly, Sir, I do not know which

world our friend was referring to! It is no secret that inflation is raging in Europe and in several countries of Asia, Africa and America–both North and South. Runaway prices are the major problem in many countries. In some countries where prices of certain essential commodities are low, the goods are just not available, resulting in long unsatisfied queues, which I have seen with my own eyes. Another hon. Member remarked that the rise in consumer prices was much higher than in wholesale prices. This does happen. But the rate of increase even in consumer prices has been brought under check. This year it was 8 per cent in December 1982, compared to 12.7 in December, 1981. Public memory is said to be short. But we expect parliamentary memory to be somewhat longer. Have our opponents of the Right and the Left, who were components or supporters of the Janata Party, so soon forgotten ?

It was amusing but not perhaps unexpected from a party known for its inconsistency to criticise our family planning efforts as being inadequate. Need I remind the House that it was the Janata Party which completely scuttled the family planning programme through vicious and false propaganda and when in power even obliterated its name. It may interest the House to know that in the last months the rate of growth of our population has, for the very first time, come down to below 2 per cent *i.e.* 1.9 per cent. I sincerely hope that no interested group will once more mislead the people to reverse this downward trend.

The Budget proposals are fresh in your minds. The Finance Minister has had an extremely difficult and unenviable task. But the Budget is consistent with our national policy. It has novel proposals. It introduces new measures for reforming our financial administration, all of which will have a long-term impact on our economy. This Budget and some other earlier proposals will mobilise a reasonably large amount of resources. There is no escape from this, because we cannot lose the momentum of planned development. The basic tenet of this Budget and for that matter of our national economic policy, has been to keep up Plan expenditure. The Central Plan expenditure in the last year's Budget was to increase by more than 27 per cent. This year the increase will be more than 26 per cent. Whatever else we have to cut and economise on, we have tried to protect our Plan. Even so, I am aware that we have had to give up many worthwhile and even necessary projects of the States and even of Central Ministries. I might say that some of these projects were very dear to my heart. Whatever may be our difficulties–drought and inflation, international recession and balance of payments–we have ensured that we are not deflected from our path of long-term development towards self-reliance. Within the plan, our most important priorities are the infrastructure, which I have already mentioned, such as power, railways, coal, steel, transport and above all petroleum. In agriculture, we emphasise irrigation, fertilisers and other services—special programmes for small and marginal farmers to increase their productivity and other measures directly related to help the poorer and the weaker sections.

To maintain this effort, we have to raise resources. This the Finance Minister has tried to do in a non-inflationary manner. Those who have more must pay more. If market prices are too high, providing large profits for some commodities, part of these profits should come back to the exchequer. If business and individuals spend less and save and invest more, they will also be taxed less. Everyone of us has to share this mammoth task of

national development, by saving more, by investing in productive assets, by working harder and becoming more productive and efficient. We also want increases in outlays, plan or non-plan, public or private, to create greater demand for domestic products. We cannot stop all imports. But we must protect our domestic industry, many of whose problems are those of development. But I must also say, Sir, that much of our domestic industry, having been protected so long, is becoming more and more reluctant to stand on its own feet and to face competition. So, that is another aspect which has to be looked into. It is a testimony to our policies of industrialisation that large domestic capacities have been built in a wide variety of products which are also fairly competitive internationally. Over the last few years our exports of engineering goods have increased rapidly. The Budget has given some more incentives for exports. We want our industries to rise to the challenge, increase their efficiency and expand their production.

To belittle our achievements is to denigrate not my party or my Government but our valiant and hard-working people–our farmers, our workers, scientists, technicians and many others.

As the watchdog of the national economy, Parliament has often criticised our public sector enterprises. Even our colleagues of the Left, who ideologically claim to support the public sector, have sometimes somehow undermined its morale. Now that this sector's performance has improved, let us not deny it the appreciation and credit which are its due. Let us urge the workers and the executives to keep up their good work.

We have been unjustly accused of being anti-worker. This is most unfair. We are sympathetic to their problems and hardships and they have usually been cooperative in spite of many difficulties. This charge is levelled by those who want workers to be anti-Government, not for the good of the worker but perhaps for their own ends. I am grateful to the workers who have refused to become their tools. This does not mean that we are oblivious of the hardships caused by lock-outs and other such steps. They also have to be looked at and dealt with.

We are constantly on the look-out for new ideas. It is with this view that I have invited five eminent economists as advisers. Their work will not overlap in any way with the functions of the Planning Commission. A rather superficial comment was printed in a newspaper—"we have enough advice; what is needed is more performance". Does one replace the other ? On the contrary, one is dependent on the other. Everywhere there is a search for new ideas, new ways out for problems and complex crisis. The condition of the global economy is grave. If oil prices go up, there is one kind of problem, if they start coming down, the world is caught in another kind of spin. International trade is in shambles. Developing countries like ours are the hardest hit. I am sure, that the eminent economists will come up with constructive ideas for short-term as well as long-term solutions. I have often expressed myself on certain ideologies. Members of the Opposition, one group or another, are deeply committed to various ideologies. But I am looking for a new break-through, not—a rehash of old ideologies.

Another charge which is particularly off the mark is that we have moved from our objective of self-reliance. Self-reliance and the strengthening of our country's economy

and fibre are the basis of our decisions and actions as a Government. Many of the economic views and philosophies which are held by certain people in the Opposition, have been derived from theories propounded abroad, where circumstances and conditions are totally different and even there these theories can hardly claim much success. Our approach is to find our own formulations and solutions.

The Government has also been accused of not being serious about dealing with corruption. Corruption drains away a good portion of funds. It undermines the moral fibre and weakens us as a nation.

It is unfortunate that an impression is sought to be created that India is a corrupt country. This is a slur against the nation. Several opposition parties conveniently overlook the complaint, which they themselves have made against one another, and propagate that the Congress alone has corruption. We are fighting corruption and we do take action against those whose image, we have reason to believe, is not good. But, often enough, such people are encouraged by the Opposition. There are no two opinions that corruption is an evil, but so is the political use sought to be made of it. We are determined to eradicate this evil of corruption. (*Interruptions*) There are many instances. I cannot go into the list just now.

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I do not want to argue with you here*. There have been many instances which are quite well-known.

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I am not going to yield to the hon Member.** I am quite sure of my ground on this. I do not make wild statements.

*** *** ***

I have justified it on many occasions.*** There have been some thoughtful observations...(*Interruptions*). This does not mean that if the Opposition shouts, what they are shouting is true. It does not mean that what yellow journalism writes is true. We have our own ways of finding out and acting accordingly. I should like to know whether any of the parties present here who have been in Government in many States have taken any such action. I do not know of any such instances.

On the domestic political scene, there have been some thoughtful observations, particularly from colleagues of my party. The growth of regionalism is a matter of grave concern. It has been the policy of the Congress to provide adequate scope for the expression of the regional personality and I strongly adhere to this view. But this personality has to function within the national perspective.

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* Replying to Shri Satyasadhan Chakraborty's remark, "Not a single instance".

** Referring to Shri Satyasadhan Chakraborty who said, "I want a single instance".

*** Replying to Shri Satyasadhan Chakraborty's observation, "You have to justify what you say".

Some people have begun to talk loosely about the breaking up of the country. This country is not going to break up. This Parliament and my party and, I am sure, all parties here will never let this happen. But if any party, group or person, concentrates too much on the problems of a particular region in isolation from the problems of the country as a whole then tensions will be aggravated.

The House has had a detailed debate on Assam. I do not want to go into this question all over again. As I said last week, the need is for all sections to curb their emotions and come together to find solutions. There is no problem which cannot be solved amicably and through earnest discussions. Even if some young people today are consumed by anger, as I said, I continue to regard them as my children and the children of this country. But, more important, can I put aside my responsibility to my country, to its unity and its integrity?

A Congress Member spoke with great feeling and conviction on the need for the revival of the spirit of brotherhood in Punjab. If I have understood Sikhism right, its basic tenet is love and brotherhood among all people. The most moving of the hymns of Shri Guru Nanak Dev are those where he says that Hindus and Muslims are alike. And in our country Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Jews are all equal.

Unfortunately, some sections are whipping up communalism. A large number of communal incidents are basically the result of economic or other rivalries and fears. Some mischievous elements immediately exploit them for communal and political ends. Some think by stirring trouble they will perhaps have a chance to become leaders.

Some mention was made just now about Memberships, Directorships etc. of certain Boards. We are reviewing this matter and I agree that there are many aspects on which urgent measures must be taken; some are being considered and other suggestions are welcome. My appeal to the House and to the hon. Members is that whether inside the House or outside, this is not the time to speak or to do anything which could spark off new incidents or tensions. You may not consider something to be aggressive or even communal, but in this delicate situation one just does not know how other people will react. I am sorry to say that there is a growth of certain extremist organisations amongst the Hindus as well as amongst the Muslims, and this is not helping the cause of harmony for any section.

The Home Minister* was telling me just now that the Mandal Commission's Report is being discussed with the Chief Ministers.

It has been remarked that we should overhaul our Intelligence machinery. We are looking into this question. I myself feel deeply concerned. It is the same as regards the training of police forces to be more sensitive to situations and to public feelings and above all not to be swayed from their duty of protecting the people, so that they earn their trust and confidence. We are taking some steps in this direction.

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* Shri Prakash Chand B. Sethi.

Some Members have spoken about non-alignment. I heard mention again of "genuinely non-aligned". I had thought that this phrase which had occasioned so much ridicule would now be avoided. When the so-called "genuine non-alignment" was in practice, the rest of the non-aligned world were 'genuinely' perplexed as to our 'genuine' intentions. Some have repeated the Western (in which non-Western followers of the West are included) propaganda that India is isolated. Are we to make up our minds and act according to what we consider right and just, or unthinkingly accept the opinions of others ? I do not want to remind hon. Members of the number of occasions on which we have borne the brunt of aggressive, even malicious accusations from many sides but ultimately it was our assessment which turned out to be the correct one. And even today, in fact at every non-aligned conference—if I remember, long before the time that I was in Government—there have been tremendous pressures from outside to somehow derail the movement, to somehow create tension and disagreement and to be able to say that the movement has failed.

So, I hope that whatever the personal or party opinions of hon. Members may be, they, and indeed all Indians, will give full cooperation to make the forthcoming Non-Aligned meeting a success. Its effectiveness can do much towards the solution of issues which are vital to the world—Disarmament and peace, and cooperation and development.

Once more, I thank you all and commend the President's Address for the acceptance of the House.

Challenges of Economic Backwardness*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, many hon. Members have spoken in this debate and I am sure they have added to the sum total of human wisdom. I thank them all.

Some Members of the Opposition are so wedded to certain concepts that they are unable to appreciate or understand any other. An hon. Member remarked that the President's Address did not mention a single important aspect of national life. Can anything be more astounding ? What is our first priority? Surely, the reduction leading to the ending of poverty and economic backwardness. Is there any remedy besides economic development and the infrastructure which enables the production of goods to meet the growing basic needs of the people ? The Address emphasises these aspects.

Some other hon. Members commented that the average growth rate of 5 per cent of GNP in the last three years is hardly an achievement. Comparisons are said to be odious, but sometimes unavoidable. Let us compare the three years of the Congress rule between 1980 and 1982 with those of the Janata-Lok Dal regimes of 1977 to 1979. It is well-known that before 1977, we had succeeded in controlling the rate of inflation, maintained a high rate of export, had accumulated a considerable amount of foreign exchange reserves and also left large stocks of grains in our godowns. When we came back in 1980, these situations had been reversed.This is also not unknown. 1979-80 was drought year; so was 1982-83. In terms of the areas affected, last year was worse than 1979-80. The figures show the difference that proper economic management makes. I know that the hon. Members are bored with figures. But I must read out some figures and bother them on this occasion. The average annual growth rate of GNP at 1970-71 prices, in the years 1977-78 and 1979-80, was 3.3 per cent.

In 1980-81 to 1982-83 it was 5.1 per capita National income at 1970-71 prices: 0.9 in 1977-80 and 2.7 in 1980-83. Index of agricultural production : 0.8 in 1977-80 and 5.9 in 1980-83. Index of industrial production: 3.1 in 1977-80 and 6.7 in 1980-83. The wholesale price index on point to point basis has been brought down from 22.2 per cent on January 12, 1980, to 14.8 per cent on January 10, 1981, to 6.4 per cent on January 16, 1982 and to 2.8 per cent on January, 15, 1983. The rate of increase in the consumer price index is also declining. From 12.7 per cent in December 1981 it fell to 8 per cent in December 1982.

Sir, We have no magic wand to create miracles overnight. We must be judged by what we are doing and how effective we have been in controlling these trends. We have been

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *R.S. Deb.*, 1 March, 1983, cc. 296-304.

primarily concerned with the prices of essential commodities which touch all sections of our people. For instance, the increase in grain price worth 16.3 per cent in 1979-80; this has been steadily lowered. Last year there was countrywide drought which I have mentioned earlier. We also gave large increases in procurement prices and as a result issue prices were also higher. Normally prices would have shot up, yet the rate of increase was 10.9 per cent much lower than what it was in 1979-80. The wholesale prices of pulses which had increased by 42 per cent in 1980-81 have actually fallen in the last two years. In 1981-82 they came down by 11.4 per cent and in 1982, up to January of this year, decreased further by 2.5 per cent. The sugar group price went up by as much as 73.4 per cent in 1979-80. During 1981-82, this price actually fell by 33.4 per cent and in the current financial year by a further 4.6 per cent. However, I am aware of the hardship of sugarcane and other farmers in some parts of the country. It is a complicated situation closely connected with trends in other parts of the world.

We have set up elaborate monitoring mechanisms for the revised 20-point programme. Targets for each point have been worked out at the national and also at the State and district levels. Special agencies have been set up in districts and blocks for implementation. This took some time. Nevertheless the results between April 1982 and January 1983 have been quite impressive. More than 18 lakh families below the poverty line have been helped under the IRDP programme. Under the NREP programme, out of the targetted 33 crore man-days for the year already about 24 crore man-days of employment have been generated. Four lakh and 20 thousand acres of surplus land have been distributed, 11 lakh Scheduled Caste families and 8 lakh Scheduled Tribe families have been assisted. Twenty–nine thousand villages without drinking water have now been supplied with at least one such water source. 6.80 lakh house–sites have been provided to the rural landless. Fifteen thousand villages have been electrified. 2.3 lakh pump sets have been energised with electricity. One hundred and sixteen primary health centres at block level and 9034 sub-centres have been sanctioned. Our target of 4 million for additional enrolment in primary schools has been exceeded by 36,000. One lakh and forty-one thousand adult education centres are now functioning with an enrolment of over 4 million. These figures are based on the latest reports which have been received after the President's speech; that is why there may be some discrepancy in the figures.

We are bringing down the rate of increase in our imports. In 1979-80 and 1980-81, the increase in imports was between 32 and 38 per cent. In 1981-82, it was brought down to 8.9 per cent. In 1982-83, taking into account the net oil imports, the increase in total imports is likely to be around only 6 per cent. In fact in the petroleum sector, after deducting exports, the value of net imports of crude oil and petroleum products is expected to come down by about Rs. 600 crore in 1982-83. We intend to reduce oil imports even further in 1983-84. One hon. Member has said–I can only say that he displayed his ignorance by his statement–that we are neglecting domestic oil production. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Earlier I have stated quite categorically that our borrowing from the IMF does not in any way affect our national economic policies which are laid down in Parliament. We made

it very clear to the Fund authorities that we would not accept any conditions which might conflict with these policies. The IMF borrowing was necessary for the additional foreign exchange to sustain our pace of development. The alternative was to borrow from international commercial banks which would have cost much more. In today's world, there is very little scope for India to get large foreign bilateral aid because every donor country knows that we do not accept aid with strings. Our aim is self-reliance and we pursue it with determination. It is not correct to imply that our debt service burden will become unmanageable, because we are using these borrowings to increase our production capacity which will expand our exports and also reduce imports. International institutions like the World Bank have assessed our debt service burden and estimate that it is well below that of many other developing countries.

We have been blamed for not dealing with corruption. We go into complaints and we have taken action against those–at whatever level–where it is necessary. I am not aware of any other party doing so, even though they themselves have been levelling charges against one another. What is mystifying is that people removed by us for unethical conduct are immediately embraced by the Opposition in one way or another. The other fact is that some persons are singled out for attack by journals and parties and the most fantastic charges continue to be heaped on them.

Sir, there is nothing wrong in loving or being proud of one's region. But if such feelings override concern for the Motherland, it will affect the country's unity and integrity, and what is more, it will deprive the region itself of the many opportunities and advantages which come from belonging to a larger unit.

This House has already had a debate on Assam and has expressed its grief and sympathy for all sufferers. The situation there has caused me great sadness of heart. Bloodshed, killings, sabotage have taken place on an unprecedented scale after the elections. All sections have been affected. Many people find it politically useful to attribute this entirely to the holding of elections. I am saying this not in anger or bitterness, nor for recrimination or fault-finding, but unless we see events in perspective, it will be very difficult to ease tensions and help the people. The agitation in Assam began in 1979. In the 1980 Parliamentary elections, candidates were prevented from filing their nominations. And let us not forget that in the intervening period, long before the announcement of the present elections, large groups including the religious and linguistic minorities, the Plains tribals, the tea garden labour, Nepalese and even various sections of the Assamese themselves, had been subjected to harassment, and this had given rise to apprehensions and fear. Henceforth a small group did its utmost to bring the Government's work to a standstill, threatening Assam Government employees and others with dire consequences should they co-operate with the Administration. Deliberate attempts were made to paralyse the normal functioning of the State. Also, let the crescendo of violence, as someone has called it, not cloud a distinctive feature of the 1983 election–substantial sections, including sections of the Assamese people themselves were prepared to and did go to vote, braving danger to themselves and their families. It is unfortunate that polling was disrupted by attacking booths, snatching ballot boxes, etc. In every agitation some extremists become active. However, I do not wish to dwell on these matters. The situation is too heart-rending and

tense. This is the time for calm and collective thinking, for understanding and reconciliation. There is no problem on earth which cannot be solved through discussions. We have a responsibility to all the people of Assam. We must ensure the safety of all our citizens. But, over and above, there is an even higher and greater responsibility for the security, integrity and unity of our country.

The same applies to other agitations and tensions. That the communal situation has not been dealt with at length in the President's Address is not for lack of concern. The minorities know of my deep anxiety for their safety and welfare. Much of the trouble is politically motivated and today extremist organisations, Hindu and Muslim, are vocal, active and aggressive. We must be careful not to spark off new incidents. All secular-minded people, who are willing to subjugate their political ambitions for a while, should join in putting out this fire of communalism. Casteism is equally divisive. And any divisive tendency weakens the whole.

Communalism is a blot on our nation. It lets loose uncontrollable passions, turning friends into fiends. It must be rooted out and this needs not only administrative steps but a concerted effort by all those who have the true interests of our country at heart. India is not just a stretch of land. India stands for tolerance, for compassion, for fellow feeling. India believes in diversity in unity.

An hon. Member recommended a Commission for Women. It is undeniable that something has to be done. If Commissions could change mental attitudes, our society would have been transformed long ago. Various legislative and administrative measures have been taken for the protection of women and for their advancement. Others are under consideration. The suggestions of the Joint Committee of Parliament are under Government's examination. But the problem of women is much more complex. Laws are not enough. We need nothing short of a complete change in the thinking of men and of women themselves. Employers and teachers, writers and film makers, text books and story books, our social customs and even our vocabulary–all these have to be tackled. The first step is the awareness of the need, the realisation that the level of society cannot rise above the level of its women. This is what Mahatmaji repeated to us time and again. Women must not wait for help but exert themselves in their own cause because it is not only their cause but the cause of men and of humanity too. It has become a hardy perennial for some of the Opposition, especially those who opposed the entire concept in earlier times, to educate us on non-alignment.We are accused of "inclining" towards the Soviet Union. We do not incline, as I have said before. We stand straight. The Soviet Union has shown understanding and has stood by us in times of need. When a country does something in our interest, should we deny them our appreciation? Non-alignment does not mean non-acknowledgement of friendship. But, what is the point at issue? The point is that we have not allowed friendship and co-operation, or for that matter disagreement and hostility, to come in the way of our independence of assessment of international or national issues or of pursuing our own direction. Our policy is to protect and promote India's national interests. From this we have not deviated. To this we shall remain steadfast.

Propaganda against India, against non-alignment, against the public sector, against my father and even me personally is not new. Shall I give you the latest instance of how

deliberately false stories are spread to malign us ? In the US Pentagon's publication the "Annual Military Posture Statement for FY 1982", India was shown as having large number of Soviet Military Advisers. Now this is not true. We protested and we were assured that the error would be corrected. However, we find that in the new publication for "FY 1983" and also in Mr. Weinberger's statement before the Senate this baseless report is repeated. In this new book on 'Leaders', former President Nixon has generously given away my home town, the town of Allahabad, to Pakistan. I was shocked and stunned when I was told the other day that there is a whispering campaign that I was in league with the RSS. How can anyone believe this? Who else in this country has so consistently fought the ideology of the RSS and the Jana Sangh? They not only harm the Minorities. I am convinced that they are doing incalculable harm to Hinduism by changing its philosophical liberalism and breadth of vision.

In less than a week, New Delhi will host the largest ever gathering of Heads of State/ Government of any time. So for 71 Heads of State/Government have informed us of their personal participation. This is a great honour for India particularly as we were requested unanimously by all members of the Non-aligned Movement. The Conference poses an enormous challenge which we accepted because of our firm commitment to the cause of non-alignment. It is hardly necessary for me to stress the magnitude of the responsibility we shall have to shoulder. This Summit is especially significant in the current troubled international situation. We hope that its deliberations will make some contribution to solution of the problems of peace, disarmament and development. Co-operation amongst the developing countries will enable us to together work for a more just economic and social order. I am sure that the people of India, and particularly the citizens of Delhi, will show their traditional warmth so that all the national leaders and delegates return with happy memories of their stay in India.

If I am called an "optimist", I plead guilty to the charge.We shall always remain optimists because our Government, and I personally, have full hope in our country and unbounded faith in our people.

Sir, I thank the hon. Members who have participated in the debate and I commend the President's Address for acceptance by this House.

Leading the Nation on the Road to Progress*

Just the day before yesterday we had a long discussion on the unfortunate and tragic happenings in our neighbourhood in Punjab and Haryana. It was my impression then that we had all agreed that we should try to create an atmosphere in this count, which would be more conducive to different elements working together; and that this could only be done when we all join forces to fight all communalist tendencies, all casteist tendencies and we above all secessionist and fissiparous tendencies. Unfortunately that debate does not seem to have left much impression on many hon. Members here.

The President's Address is not basically dealing with these subjects, although these are the background and are very important; I shall come back to them at a later stage. I have referred to this only because of the irregular disturbance which took place just before I got up to speak.

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Mr. Speaker, Sir, in this House we, those sitting on this side, the Government, do not expect praise, but we do say that proven facts cannot be disputed. I could have gone into much greater detail, but fortunately my colleague, the Finance Minister, presented the Budget yesterday and he has given the detailed figures. So, I need not go into them. But even at the risk of boring my friends here, I am going to repeat some of the things he said.

Now, the most important fact of this year and these last four years has been the big increase in our development effort year by year, not only in physical terms but in terms of the number of people covered and sections of population specially helped. In the Sixth Plan as a whole the growth of the G.D.P. (Gross Domestic Product) is expected to be 5.2 per cent which is then highest in any Plan. Financially, the Plan outlay has been increasing substantially year by year and this year it will be 25 per cent higher than in the previous year. Our sound fiscal and monetary policies have created a sound macro environment for growth, but we are also concentrating on the vigorous implementation of our programmes so as to give greater purchasing power to all sections, specially the poorer sections and alleviating the hardship of our middle classes.

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, *L.S. Deb.*, 1 March 1984, cc. 513-41.

It is about the Indian economy.* If you were not travelling so much, perhaps you would know more about it.

As for the coverage, let us see what we have been able to do for various sections. But I shall go into the details only on two or three of the most deprived sections. I was astonished to hear my old friend, Shri Banarsidas saying that the purchasing power of farmers has gone down. The very fact that more and more farmers are using in larger and larger quantities various modern inputs and are thus able to produce more, contradicts this allegation. You need only compare the deal which our farmers got during the years 1977-79 and since 1980. I should like to read out these figures.

We have substantially increased procurement and support prices of agricultural commodities. Since January, 1980, wheat has increased by 32.2 per cent, paddy 38.9 per cent, pulses 40.71 per cent, cotton 45 per cent, ground nut 6 per cent. Sugarcane prices have not been allowed of fall and wherever there was any remote suspicion that there might be trouble, we have gone ahead to give support prices and so on. By way of direct help, we have reduced fertiliser prices by 7.5 per cent in 1983, we expanded short-term credit by 47 per cent and long and medium term credit by 27 per cent. Farmers, specially the small and marginal farmers and landless labour have been the focus of our attention. It is obvious that all of us owe our very lives to their production. In fact, I think it is no exaggeration to say that our Government and this particular Government has done more for them than has ever been done before.

We are trying out the crop insurance scheme on a pilot basis. Irrigation and dry farming have been special concerns of mine and I should like to give some figures about irrigation. The addition made in 1981-82 was 2.2 million hectares; in 1982-83, 1983-84 and 1984-85 each year 2.3 million hectares. In just these four years more than 9 million hectares have been added. And it is most unfair criticism to say that we fell short of the annual target by a small percentage. We had, I admit, kept our target rather high. If there had not been drought, I am sure, we would have overtaken it.

So far as dry farming is concerned, a national scheme for dry farming was formulated and launched; more than 4000 water-sheds identified and crops and practices suitable for them have been devised. One hon. Member spoke–may be more than one spoke–of our importing foodgrains as if this was some big secret we were hiding and which they had managed to unearth. Sir, I have spoken on this openly and publicly. As you know, we did not import foodgrains because of any compulsion but because of abundant caution. This is nothing new. I have spoken on this the last time we imported grain. On both occasions we were able to buy at a time when prices were low in the other countries. Whatever the monsoon and weather forecasts may be, one has to be careful and be prepared in case of trouble or of drought. We should not find ourselves begging as happened in 1966. I should like to remind the House that when I became Prime Minister in 1966, it was a time of famine–not just drought but famine. When I toured the States of Bihar, Maharashtra and at that time Mysore, the only point that farmers put to me was : Don't bother about relief;

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* Replying to Dr. Subramaniam Swamy's question "Is it about the Indian economy?"

don't bother about anything. But do something so that when there is drought in future, we should be stronger in facing it. So, since then, this has been my major concern. Now, this time in 1982-83, there was drought which, I think, has been called the country's very worst affecting hundreds of districts. Its impact was not felt by the people, and the Opposition was denied the opportunity to raise a hue and cry as they would have liked to do.

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That is because of our success in managing the crisis. Yes, there were good buffers/ stock from internal procurement and we augmented them by importing 4 million tonnes in 1982-83 and 2.7 million tonnes in 1983-84. There was no knowing last year how this year's monsoon would turn out. So, it is an example of taking advance care as any good housewife would do for her household.

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Now, I mention certain special categories. It is not that these categories are more special than others or as someone has said "more equal than others." I think, we are all equal. But some categories have suffered over the centuries. I am not talking merely of our programmes for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes because they have been discussed in detail and the figures are known. There have been questions and answers about them in this House. I am speaking for some of those who are not so well-known. One such category is that of fishermen. We have formed 5,331 fishermen's cooperatives. We are giving them credit for the purchase of boats and equipment.We have set up training institutions. We have reserved 5 kilometre zones from the shore for traditional fishermen, so that those who are now going in for deep–sea fishing will not harm the interests of the poorer fishermen. We have developed infrastructure facilities—roads, schools and welfare activities. There is a Group Insurance Scheme. The Central Government has approved a scheme of subsidising 50 per cent of the premium for accident insurance. The remaining 50 per cent is to be provided by the States. Rs. 39 lakhs has been provided in 1983-84 for this scheme. The scheme is applicable to marine as well as inland fishermen. Originally, we had announced it only for the sea going ones. But some months ago, my attention was drawn to the fact that river and lake fishermen were left out. So, we have included them also.

We have also asked the States to create a Natural Calamity Distress Relief Fund.

A large section of our poor people are weavers. We believe in encouraging handloom production. Not only is this the means of livelihood for millions of people but it is an old Indian tradition of which we are proud and which we want to retain in all its traditional beauty. In 1978-79, only 126 million sq. metres were produced by the handloom sector. In 1983-84, 350 million sq. metres are expected to be produced.

There is a special scheme for hill area development which is more liberal in its terms. Cooperatives are being encouraged. The coverage of cooperatives at the beginning of the Sixth Plan was only 30 per cent. By 1983-84, we expect to achieve a coverage of 52 per

cent. The level of the annual outlay is being increased from about Rs. 16 crore in 1979-80 to about Rs. 33 crore in 1984-85.

Many hon. Members have spoken about unemployment. This problem is causing great anxiety to us all. We have taken some measures earlier and we continue to press on with them. There is no doubt that, as an hon. Member mentioned just now, the increase in population is not helping this or any of our programmes for development.

Apart from our regular plans which cover all these sections, hon. Members will remember that we called out from them 20-points. They are to focus attention on those aspects of the Plan which we felt needed much more concentrated attention and which tended to get pushed into the background by bigger programmes, probably unintentionally.

The thrust of this 20-point programme is higher production and direct help to weaker sections, specially in creating employment in our rural areas. No programme has evoked so much enthusiasm and expectations amongst our people as this one. Is it working ideally ? I must confess, no. But it is making an impact and I think, this is what you can expect of any programme. No matter how good our intentions are, no matter how much money we have, and we do not have enough money, we can only do our utmost to take the programme forward and to try to reach more and more people with each step that we take.

The allocation for the 20-point programme is being raised by 47 per cent next year. Whenever, I get grievances whether from MPs or MLAs or other people about the programme not working well, we look into them. The State Governments are monitoring the programme; the Central Government is monitoring it. Apart from that, we also send out our own people to let us know where there are shortfalls or mistakes. They do find shortfalls; they do sometimes find discrepancies in numbers. As you know, I do not hide these things. The programme on the whole is going well. What we need is greater people's participation.

In many places where the programme is not functioning so well, it is because the people do not even know about it. They do not know their rights; they do not know what they can ask for. And, of course, a major point to keep in view is that even if they do know, we cannot possibly cover 680 million people all at once. Therefore, those who are left out of the first or the second or the third groups of people who take advantage are bound to feel discouraged and frustrated. I can only appeal to the hon. Members in the Opposition not to encourage the sort of discouragement and frustration which will obstruct the programme itself.

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That is the whole point now.* That is exactly the point. The Opposition does not believe in Programmes which will help the poor people. They do not believe...(*Interruptions*)

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* Responding to Dr. Subramaniam Swamy's remark, "We do not believe in the Programme".

That is why we are facing this extremely difficult situation. For three years, the whole talk of the Opposition has been "We do not believe in these Programmes. We do not want to implement the Plans. Therefore, we are going to roll it up", which is what they did. These are not my words, but theirs. I am merely quoting them.

*** *** ***

Under the IRDP, we have already helped 9 million families including 3.2 million Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes families and this year another 3 million will come under this Programme.

We are expanding the National Rural Employment Programme; the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme, and Self-Employment for Educated Unemployed. (*Interruptions*)

Perhaps many of you are parents here and some of you are not...

*** *** ***

You all know that small children think that if they close their eyes, they are hiding themselves or the thing in front of them will go away. And there is also a story–I forget whether it is Indian story or of some other country–of a philosopher who thought if he closed his eyes, the thing would go away.

*** *** ***

This philosopher kicked a rock and you can imagine what happened. He hurt his foot.

Somebody made the complaint that we had given up the "Food for Work Programme".

No. It has not been given up. But, it is true that it was not working well. I myself visited many areas when I was out of power to see how this Programme was functioning and I did not find a single place where they said that they were actually getting what they were supposed to get.... And this complaint... (*Interruptions*)

This has actually happened to me. This is nobody else's report.

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There was spurious work and there was the problem of middlemen who were in charge of distribution. Some States did not lift the grain. As you know, there was also a time when we had acute shortage.

However, we tried to retain this Programme to the extent possible and now we are giving one measure per man day in lieu of a part of the wages under the NREP.

There has been a lot of criticism of banks. Hon. Member may have noticed that I have also raised my voice on that point, not because no bank is doing any good work but because some banks or, rather, some individuals in some banks have not behaved as they should.

I have drawn the attention of the Finance Minister as well as others concerned to see that there is closer monitoring and I have also asked those who have complained that instead of making sweeping complaints, they should give specific instances which can be inquired into. Those particular incidents would be examples for others. But you cannot inquire into a general and vague complaint.

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One can inquire into specific instances.* I think many Members even on the opposite side will agree that in the old days, banks were for a extremely limited section of the people; the banks were for the rich. This was one of the issues on which some of our friends left us. Now banks are for all and especially, for the poor and hardworking...(*Interruptions*) No, I am not saying that everybody gets loans. But the door has been opened for them to get them. That is the big thing. We are free today but we have not got the sort of freedom that we had dreamt of. But at least the door is open for us to work towards it. Similarly, we are opening the doors, we are opening opportunities and we must see that these programmes are implemented in the proper way. And in this we seek the cooperation of all the general public, including politicians.

I consider this to be one of the biggest achievements of our Party and our Government. In fact, Bank Nationalisation was a turning point in our economic history and we are not allowing the banks to rest on their old laurels. There has been a big growth in rural deposits and in the number of branches opened. We cannot possibly give loans to absolutely everybody. This is where the difficulty arises and also the test is one of credit-worthy purpose. Obviously a person with such a purpose becomes a credit-worthy person...

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We have said that when there is a special problem and when the person is absolutely unable to pay for a very good reason—this is, of course, my suggestion, I am not saying that the banks have accepted it—in those cases, some debts should be written off. But this is something which I cannot dictate to the banks. They have to study and decide. My suggestion to them was that where they ignore delays in the repayment of debts by big concerns, they should certainly give the same advantage to the poor. This is what I am saying.

Now we have also said that a greater proportion of deposits should be disbursed within the region of collection...

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Some people do not want us to succeed in this objective. So obstacles are being created and false propaganda made in order to bring this credit programme into discredit. In fact one political party took large number of people to the banks to demand such loans and when the banks could not immediately give them....

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* Replying to Shri Ramavatar Shastri's observation, "I have given specific instances".

They may be all poor.* But, as I said, we cannot yet cover the 680 million population of India. It can only proceed little by little...(*Interruptions*)

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I remember the time, Sir, Shri Vajpayee will forgive me—when there were floods in one area of Delhi. At the time they did not give rations to our people. I went there myself. It was only after we made a big noise that rations were distributed. Don't lecture me here, Shri Vajpayee. I know what I am saying.

*** *** ***

This is not true.** Never in my life have I made a false allegation.

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I am sorry to say that not only did it happened then but it has happened very recently in another State also. I am not naming the State to avoid further shouting. People know it well. This talk about taking political advantage is utter nonsense. Why should he not take political advantage of our good programmes and after good achievements ? The Opposition wishes to take political advantage out of disruption—we, out of construction.

*** *** ***

I do not want to get into questions of ideology now. There can be no doubt in anybody's mind anywhere in the whole world that had the Congress Party not been at the helm of affairs here, India would not have been one, India would not be united and integrated. (*Interruptions*). Some of you opposite are sitting with those parties which were at the root of the disruption. Some of you were not even born at that time. What do you know about it ?

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I am not blaming you, why do you interrupt ?*** Had you been with me on the streets of Delhi, you would have come to know who were the people behind these riots. Their faces have not yet faded from my memories.†

*** *** ***

I am not speaking about the freedom movement****. I am talking about the period after the freedom movement. Mr. Indrajit Gupta, please tell him to understand this. We are talking of the disruptions that were created after freedom.

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* Responding to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's remark,"They are all poor".

** Responding to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's remark, "The Prime Minister is in the habit of making baseless allegations".

*** Responding to Shri Ramavatar Shastri's remark, "Madam we were also there".

† Translated from Hindi.

****Replying to Shri Ramavatar Shastri's observation, "We were also there in the freedom movement".

But, there were people who were spreading communal disharmony at that time. With my own two eyes I saw people killing people. Do not tell me that this is untrue. It was because of that Gandhiji allocated that work to me. There are many here who do not know what has happened before they do not know the history—what happened in Kashmir or what happened in Delhi or elsewhere in those years.

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I am not pointing to anybody. I say there are many people.*

I do not know your age. I do not know when you were born.

Now, Sir, one of the questions which is bothering all of us and I share and understand the concern of the Opposition, is the question of periods. The Economic Survey and budget speech have dealt with this issue at great length. My colleague, the Finance Minister has also put it in its historic perspective but I want to repeat just a few facts.

Two huge increases in the prices of oil some years ago triggred off world-wide inflation. No country has really recovered from it since of course the problem is not there for countries who do not need oil, or those, who have oil. We were able to control inflation in 1974-75 in a manner in which few countries did. Other countries have acknowledged this in public statements and international conferences.

Price stability was maintained until 1977. But in 1979-80 things went haywire. Prices went up by more than 22 per cent. That was the situation we found in 1980. I don't like repeating these things but since you keep repeating your allegations, I have to answer. We worked hard to control inflation and in 1980-81 it came down to 15 per cent. In 1981-82 it was about 2.5 per cent. Just look at the difference from over 22 to 2.5 per cent. Unfortunately nature took a hand and we had very severe droughts. Even so we managed to keep inflation at 6.5 per cent in 1982-83 but the pressures generated by these two successive years of failure of rains have created problems in the current year. Even so, Sir, skilful management has prevented the kind of situation which had developed in 1979-80. What did we do ? We had an intensive programme to develop agricultural production. Even in such a very bad year, the decline of production was much less as compared with 1979-80.

Yesterday or day before an hon. Member remarked : 'What have you got to do with production. Rains were good'. Rains have been good in many years and rains have been bad in many years. I have just shown how in a year of very scanty rains we still managed to control the situation. The rains were exceedingly good during part of the Janata Party period for two years. I forget which year but for two years they were very good. One year

* Answering Dr. Subramaniam Swamy's question, "To whom you are pointing."

was bad. But production did not go up. How does production go up ? It is because of the manner in which we come forward to help farmers. We have also had a sizeable expansion of the public distribution system. You will, perhaps, remember that most of the shops were closed down in the Janata Party period.

*** *** ***

You don't believe in them.* But we do believe in fair distribution. Therefore, it is our duty to do everything we can do to expand it.

In 1980 there were 2.36 lakh fair price shops. Now, there are 2.97 lakhs. Distribution of essential commodities through this distribution system has been stepped up. A record 15 million tonnes of foodgrains were released in 1982 and we think that in 1983 it was more. I don't have the exact figures with me at the moment. Public stocks were augmented through timely imports. Action was taken to control money supply and monetary policy was tightened. The budgetary situation was kept under control and we made every effort to curtail Government expenditure. It has been curtailed in some areas but I confess not at all to my satisfaction.

Incentives such as Excise Duty reliefs were given to stimulate industrial production. This policy package has yielded results.

The rate of increase of prices was fairly step up to September, 1983. After that, the rate of increase has slowed down. We are continuing our vigilance and will not hesitate to take further steps as and when necessary.

The Budget has reduced levies on many items of essential consumption. It has to be ensured that these benefits are passed on to the consumer. This is our major difficulty. The Government will monitor this.

My hon. friend opposite questioned our claim of 5 per cent industrial growth because the average growth rate between 1978-79 and 1982-83 was much lower. The fact is that in 1979-80 there was a fall in industrial production with a negative rate of growth—minus 1.4 per cent. But in the three years 1980-81, 1981-82 and 1982-83 the average growth rate of industry was 5.5 per cent. I am confident that the growth of industrial production will be sustained. We are concerned with industrial production and we are worried where it has gone down, and it has in some areas. But no one can deny the substantial gains made in the last four years nor should they be decried by anybody. A simple example is Oil, where we have struck it luckily. But it is also a question of policy, of being able to exploit the oil properly and to make it available.

As you know, there has been a phenomenal increase in indigenous oil production. How did it come about? By national determination. Fortunately this is a sector which is not

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* Responding to Dr. Subramaniam Swamy's remarks, "We did not believe in them. We did not need them."

subject to natural calamities although it is also an endangered area. Many industries are subject to natural calamities. But, in several industries, such as Cement, Electricity Generation and Coal, we have made impressive increases.

The main problem is of higher capacity utilisation. We have been going into this, sector by sector and plant by plant.

The House knows that there are some long-term structural programmes. The biggest of them is the modernisation of out-dated plants and out-dated managerial methods regarding which we are taking suitable policy action.

We are deeply concerned about problems faced by Industrial Labour. If the farmers are the foundation, I would say that Industrial labour is the spin of a modern nation.

A matter of concern–and which crops up again and again-is that of the phenomenon of corruption. It is there. It is a fact to be reckoned with, and it is something which we must fight with all our might at every level and in every possible way. Government agencies are doing their utmost to check this and to punish the guilty. The issues are complex and they do not yield to simplistic solution. We need vigilant public opinion, that can bring specific cases to our notice. Whenever, such cases are brought, I assure the House, that I have done this in the past, and shall continue to do so, that is, to look into every case and see that it is properly dealt with. But cynicism is a protector of corruption. It does not help to be cynical about these matters. The fight against corruption has to be relentless. Certain firm steps have been initiated for which we will need public co-operation. In fact hardly any programme can be successful without full public co-operation.

The day before yesterday, Punjab was discussed at great length. I just missed the beginning of his speech. My hon. friend opposite accused me of not clarifying Government's mind on the subject. Since that was stated in detail in the Home Minister's speech, I thought there was no point in my repeating it.

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There is no contradiction in Government's views.* Sometimes we have offered a solution. But if it is not accepted naturally we have to look at the whole matter again. But there is no difference of view amongst ourselves on these issues. Our stand was very clearly explained. The basic point which I mentioned yesterday and which I should like to repeat, is that communal violence and terrorism have to be rooted out from our body politic. Communalism was the biggest threat to the initial unity and stability of the country and it remains the biggest threat to our present unity and stability. It is the Indian version of fascism and my struggle against it has been uncompromising. Our fight is against extremism and the separatist philosophy of extremism. Extremism is against the interests of all sections of our people, whether they are Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and other people and of the nation as a whole. The Sikhs are dynamic and enterprising people who have

* Replying to Dr. Subramaniam Swamy's question, "What he said, is it Government's view, because we have seen that there are contradictions in Government's view ?"

contributed much to the country, not only in Punjab. If you travel all over India, you will find that there is hardly a place in which you don't find Sikhs. Initially we were told that certain races were martial races, certain races have some qualities and not other races. Now we know that after people get training, the people of any State show those qualities, of courage or other types of ability and capacity.

I have had a special feeling for the Sikhs, because of what they suffered during Partition and because of the manner in which they got on their feet again without complaint. This is one of the qualities I admire most in people I have specially mentioned this a number of times. Their prosperity and progress are linked with the progress and prosperity of the whole country. But this progress and prosperity can only take place when there is also progress, prosperity and harmony amongst the other people around them, with their neighbours in Punjab or in any other State. I do not think a community which has itself suffered so much should allow the bonds of brotherhood and trust to be weakened by a tiny minority of extremists. I do not know whether this particular group is anti-national or what is motivating it but there is certainly a very small element–I do not know what, word to use–that is bent upon creating confusion, discord, mistrust and suspicion which has led to violence and terrorism. I agree with my hon'ble friend who said that the Sikh masses should not be confused with any one political party and certainly not with the extremists. They are not identified with this small group of terrorists.

While I condemn the killings in Punjab, I equally condemn the killings and other happenings in Haryana. This type of retaliation does not achieve anything, it does not strengthen anybody. In fact, it is counter-productive because it increases violence, it increases suspicion and feelings of communalism. The same is true of other communal incidents which have taken place earlier, that is, between Hindus and Muslims in some parts of the country, between Christians and others in different parts of the country. These tendencies are divisive for the country. They weaken our country and the States in which they occur. They weaken our whole country and we must get together at least on this one issue and categorically state that we are not going to allow such incidents to take place. Not only is it very bad for us but it is bad for the communities themselves and for the character of individuals. Apart from its being damaging economically and socially, as individuals, we deteriorate. Even those who may not take part merely, by living in the midst of such an atmosphere of hatred and bitterness, deteriorate as human beings.

Unfortunately, there has been some false propaganda, much of it is abroad, by misguided elements. It is against the country's honour. We cannot ignore the danger of such groups acting as tools of foreign agents. As I said earlier, they may be very few in number, but if you see the foreign press, they got publicity out of all proportion to their number or to what is happening, and generally the impression is given of the whole country being in flames, everybody killing everybody else, whereas as people of all religions will testify, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, that wherever there has been trouble, there are numerous instances of people of other religions saving their neighbours and helping them in threatening situations. This is the atmosphere which we must build together.

A suggestion was made by my hon. friend opposite that we should have peace brigades, peace committees, or peace marches. I am all for it, but we have to be sure that all those

who take part in these marches are actually for peace, but some times our experience has been a little different.

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The day before yesterday I said in this or the other House, that the basic problem in Punjab is not the demands put forward by the Akali Dal. The legitimate demands of any group are to be met through discussions and negotiations in a democratic system such as ours. But here the basic problem is the kernel of extremism with its irrational and destructive philosophy of violence. Violence and terrorism should not be allowed to become a premium in resolving a problem. An hon. Member said that some people were interested that the talks did not succeed. That is what I meant. When I said, I do not know, what would be achieved, this is what was at the back of my mind ; I knew that certain people were interested in keeping distance between us.

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I am not objecting to what you said.* You said, before this or after this particular remark, that my expression shows that I thought that the tripartite talks would not succeed. Something like that you said.

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It is in answer to that I am speaking I am not saying that we should not have talks. What I said was that it was because I felt on the basis of certain information that there were individuals interested in breaking the talks, that I expressed certain doubts about the success of the talk. There is no doubt in my mind whatsoever, the negotiations are the only way out for the ending of any dispute, whether national or international. There is no question of anybody encouraging these funds to be taken to the streets. We oppose this vehemently. I am again stressing the responsibility of all political parties and non-political people to realise the danger of terrorism, the danger to ourselves and the danger it throws up the chance it gives to those who may wish greater destruction so that they can interfere.

In Kashmir also the situation is a disturbing one, because of the concerted activities of secessionists and certain communal organisations. They pose a threat to national security and to the integrity of the nation. As one hon. Member has pointed out, insulting the national flag is no less serious than insulting the Constitution. Why has the Opposition not spoken up about this ? The Central Government have written to the State Government. Firm and effective action and continued vigilance is needed, and we keep pressing for it.

The murder of our official in the United Kingdom, Shri Mhatra has to be viewed in the context of the anti-national activities of certain such organisations.

Irrespective of political differences, all should unite in isolating and combating such elements. The question is not one of victory or defeat of any political or other party in

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* Responding to Shri Indrajit Gupta's remark, "I said there is no alternative to talks even if you fail at first".

Jammu and Kashmir. The question is of preserving the unity and integrity of our country, on the basic principle of secularism and democracy. When we see that these precious objectives are threatened, we have to raise our voice against it. If we did not see that there were some signs of such a threat, I would not have raised my voice.

Now, we have got used to the face that sometime Pakistan says that India is not reconciled to its existence. It is an old complaint which we have refuted time and again. The creation of Pakistan was something to which we agreed. Whether we liked it or not liked it, is beside the point. We agreed to it, we have accepted it and we are living with it ; and we believe in co-existence. Because I said that our system is a democratic one, in answer to a question from a Pressman–he or she asked, I forget who it was–viz. "Well, what about Pakistan ?" ; I replied : "Look ; we believe in democracy ; but it is for other countries to decide their own system of Government." Because we believe in democracy, we may like other countries to be democratic. But it is for them to decide what system they will have. That is the extent of my remarks regarding which hon. friend opposite blamed me for interfering in Pakistan's internal affairs.

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Unfortunately, you do not wear a bonnet.* Otherwise, there is a saying in English, 'you have a bee in your bonnet'. That is your bee which buzzes all the time. You cannot see realities. That prevents your understanding these issues clearly. We have not said that we support the Soviet system. That is our quarrel with these friends, this side.

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We have our own system. They have their own. We are not interfering in their system, and I don't think they are interfering in our system.

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No. Mr. hon. Member.** I can tell you I was not. I have exchanged numerous letters....

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If I discuss the substance, you will then want the letter to be laid on the Table of the House. I am willing to tell you if you come to my office because there was nothing secret in it. It was just a short, about five or ten line letter.

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It was a very short letter, for a particular occasion. But I am not going to lay it on the Table of the House. Therefore, I am not going to tell you here. I am prepared to tell you outside.

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* Dr. Subramaniam Swamy who asked, "What about democracy in Soviet Union ? Why don't you speak about it ?

** Replying to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's questions, "There was a letter from you addressed to the late Soviet leader, Andropov. Was it not an interference ? Were you not inviting him to interfere in the internal affairs of the country ?" Shri Vajpayee wanted to know the contents of the letter.

There was no question of his services.* Suppose you come to me and say: "Would you mind giving me such–and–such a message ?". I shall say, 'Yes'; if I agree with what you are saying, of course.

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But, well, this much I can say that I did not write that.

....I am unhappy at the frequent complaints that India is not reconciled to the existence of Pakistan ; and I am sorry that hon. Members sometimes also say something along those lines. This does not serve the national cause. I frankly tell you that I am at a total loss to understand such a sentiment when I myself have not only declared my policy but acted upto it. You will remember that it is I who have taken all the initiatives to re–establish friendly relations with Pakistan and with China. I hope you are happy with that.

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...But in spite of that fact, from across the border statements are made which are not conducive to the creation of a better atmosphere. I do not want to go into the question of arms, but it is something that is of concern to us.

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So, there is no doubt that we want better relations with all our neighbours, not just Pakistan and China. You know with what great restraint we have acted in Sri Lanka, although on that issue our hon. friend had quite different views. You will remember what demand be made about sending our army.

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Now, as I said, it is our policy to respect all our neighbours like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan and China : and we shall not spare any effort to promote good neighbourly relations with them. We have taken an active part in the establishment of the South Asian Regional Cooperation which was launched last year by the Foreign Ministers of the 7 countries concerned and which has now gathered a certain momentum. We welcome this development.

But the situation in our region cannot be divorced from the general environment in the world as a whole. Hon. Members know that the international atmosphere is marked by a complete collapse of detente which had to create a new atmosphere, if not, a friendship, at least a direction of co-operation and friendship. But today there is heightening of tension and confrontation. The casualties in the war between Iran and Iraq both of whom are–good friends of ours have now reached enormous proportions and cause us deep anguish. We want a climate of peace, trust and mutual respect ; in other words, adherence in letter and spirit to the principle of peaceful coexistence. This is necessary now more than ever

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* Responding to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's query, "Why were the services of a CBI member utilised to despatch that letter".

before. India is working hard for the ending of the nuclear arms race. These are the two main international questions which have been of concern to everybody who has been here; and we have had leaders from the East and from the West both the political East and West, as well as the geographical East and West, who have also expressed their concern over these two matters, first, the stock-piling of nuclear armaments and taking the war into space and so on ; and the second is the growing disparity between the affluent and the developing countries. This must be diminished. My Government remains decided to support all efforts to achieve these objectives. The whole world, needs peace but we, the developing world, need it more than the industrialised countries, because we have another war to fight, it is the war against poverty, the war against under development. We need peace and harmony internally and externally to win this war and to take our country forward.

The President's Address, Sir, is an opportunity for annual stock-taking. Criticism of policies and programmes is a normal feature of Parliamentary life and of this debate and we accept it. But I do hope that the hon. Members will look at the broad direction of movement. I certainly do not want to minimise the enormity of the problems, or the long distance yet to be covered on the road to progress, but I do have full faith in the Indian people and I am sure that if we can work together at least to combat the disruptive forces, then we can achieve far greater progress which will help the whole country. All our programmes should be seen in the overall context in which we are functioning today. The people should realise the difficulties of nation building in the sort of situation that exists in our country as well as in most other place around us.

I thank all the Members for their patience. I commend the President's Address for adoption. I request all those who have moved amendments to withdraw them.

Thank you.

2

NO-CONFIDENCE MOTIONS

India Simply Cannot Fail*

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir. I rise with a very heavy heart. My heart is not heavy because there is a no-confidence motion, because this seems to have become a regular feature .....(*Interruptions*)

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Sir, nothing has been said in the course of this debate that we have not heard before. There has been the same disarray among the Members of the Opposition each one giving a different prescription for the nation's health. And yet, I welcome this opportunity to speak because of my own deep concern and very great distress at the atmosphere of violence and defiance of law which is prevailing in our country. I am sorry to say that this is being encouraged. Just now some hon. Members have drawn your attention, which you said will not be recorded, to what is happening outside. I am not fully aware of the exact picture and I have sent a note that they should find out immediately and let me know, but the earlier reports were somewhat conflicting. But this is a symptom of what is happening in many places. Whether it is amongst the students, whether it is amongst other sections of the people, there is a very deliberate attempt to incite violence.

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I had a meeting with the Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University only yesterday and also with the heads of other departments.** In other towns also where I go I have been meeting the people concerned with education.

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Statements may have appeared and more statements may appear also, but the picture has to be looked at from all sides and not just from one side.***

I am one who abhors use of force in any circumstance, but when there is incitement to violence and when violence leads to acts of defiance of law, arson, looting, destruction of public property and valuable property such as transmitters, railway equipment and other

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion of No-Confidence in the Council of Ministers, *L.S. Deb.*, 7 November, 1966, cc. 1592 - 1605.

** Responding to Shri Indrajit Gupta's suggestion, "Ask the Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University?"

*** Responding to Shri A.K. Gopalan's remark, "There is a statement in the papers today by the Vice-Chancellor, Shri R.K. Nehru".

things some of which are very difficult to get again, then there is no other way, it can only be met by force. This is what is, unfortunately, happening : violence leading to force, force leading to more violence and violence leading to more force. This is why I said I welcome this opportunity to speak, because I want to put this aspect before you.

I do not think the nation is in a state today when we can bicker over small things, take up small petty issues or other difficulties. This is a situation in which we must all pull together and think how to bring the situation under control and see what can be done so that we can once again have normal life. It is not merely a question of people airing their grievances. I have always said and I maintain that every grievance, every genuine demand, should be looked into promptly, thoroughly and it should be dealt with. Some of the demands which are being made are demands which cannot be fulfilled.

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The demands are not all addressed to the Government there are many people who are involved in this.*

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Those that come within our concern or any government's concern will be and are being looked into and I want to urge upon everybody concerned that they should be more prompt and more thorough.

But the question today is not of any particular demand. If you ask the students what demand are they now fighting for, they do not know themselves, they have forgotten what the original demand was. So it is not a question of demand, it is a question of the methods adopted and the manner in which their grievances are being ventilated, and I feel this is something which the Government must oppose however disagreeable it may be and whatever it costs because if you do not do it the cost is much greater in another way.

Sir, what is happening outside is, as I said, not an attack on the Government. I feel it is an attack on a way of life, on our values, on our traditions which we have so far cherished. We have in India followed certain paths. Whether it was Gandhiji, whether it was my father, they took this line from our own ancient teachings. They gave a modern meaning to the word "non-violence", and we struggled even during our independence along this traditional path. It was not a path that was understood then. I remember, as a small girl, we were made fun of, we were abused, we were scolded and we were ridiculed. But we believed it was the right path and we stuck to that path. It was the right path and we did succeed by that path. Then, again, we want to establish democracy in this country. There is mud-slinging from every side about authoritarian ways, but I doubt whether anywhere else in the world you will find a party with such a great majority putting up with so much from an extremely divided opposition. The opposition has an important role to play in a democracy, and we want to give the views of the opposition full consideration and all

* In response to Shri Hem Barua's query, "To whom are you addressing this ?"

courtesy, and we do so. But I submit that sometimes they take advantage of it, and it is because of this that we witness some of the scenes which we are witnessing outside.

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Some of the methods which are used today are methods which are cutting at the very roots of democracy. Democracy cannot exist if the rule of law goes and if law and order are constantly being violated. It simply cannot exist.

One hon. Member just now quoted what he thought I had said. I am very sorry, Sir, this is not what I have said at all. I said that there are certain conditions in which there could be revolution, and I described those conditions at considerable length. It is not something that I can do in one or two sentences.

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I do not know how many newspapers have printed it, but still it is not correct.* And it is not something which I have said for the first time. I have expounded this theory at numerous meetings in many parts of the country. There are conditions in which a democracy cannot exist, and I am afraid if we do not deal very strongly with the situation now, we may come to such a pass. But, I say, in that particular meeting I was not discussing law and order, I was not discussing the political situation. I was not speaking about our Government in particular, but in the abstract, about governments, and I said that if the interests of the vast majority of the people were not taken into account and they got a feeling that the benefits were going to a few, then naturally the people would not stand it. It was a very long explanation which I cannot repeat now.

I am sure hon. Members are aware what an extremely delicate and difficult job the police and the magistracy have to do. When they have not acted in time, I remember here in this very House how many complaints were voiced—why they did not act in time. But suppose they take strong action before a shop was looted or other violent action has taken place, then also they are criticised.

Now, it is true that once force is used, innocent people do suffer. It is something which unfortunately cannot always be helped. It is something which I deplore. My fullest sympathies are with those who get hurt or injured in this manner, and we must do all we can to help them. But when there is a large crowd it is not possible to distinguish as to who is innocent and who is guilty. Even when you do distinguish, if there is a lathi charge, it does fall on anybody who happens to be in the way.

As I said, Government cannot possibly allow persistent defiance of law. It has its reponsibility to this House and to the people. It must deal with the situation and with all anti-social elements, and this Government is determined to do so. I certainly hope that we shall have the unreserved support of all sections of the House. But what I would like to say is, while as I said I abhor the use of force, at the same time, I must condemn the creation of situations which lead to the use of force.

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* Responding to a Member's remark, "It has appeared in some newspapers".

I do not think the Government is to blame.* The Government may certainly be blamed in some cases, but the inciting of people is certainly not done by the Government.

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Whoever has done it, I am not here to apportion blame. That is not the point. I am not speaking here to say whether you are wrong or I am right; I am only saying that we should get together now and try to make a concerted effort to deal with the situation.

Lapses do occur and all that we can do in that case is to try and minimise such occurrences. As I said before, violence is not our way of life. It is foreign to us and we want to keep it away from us. Our democratic system is in danger. We know that there are many other dangers to it. We have been threatened on our borders; we have been threatened by other pressures; we have many internal difficulties. To face all this, we must stand together and strengthen our democracy and our freedom.

I began to speech by saying that I am speaking with a heavy heart. It is not only because of the violence which we are witnessing now. Perhaps you have heard that the last two days I have spent in some of the worst affected area of our country, in parts of Bihar and parts of Uttar Pradesh. There are people with genuine grievances, with very genuine hardships. Their lives are at stake. But I did not hear one complaint from them; not one person came to me and said "give us this" or "give us that".

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No, they did not.** Every single peasant is trying to do whatever he can do. He is not interested in speeches, he is not interested in agitations and demands and force. He is trying to utilise every second of his time, every ounce of his energy to produce whatever he can, to retrieve whatever he can get. In this situation, we find people in the cities and so on, instead of trying to see what they can do to help those people, because it is the most serious crisis which we have in this country, creating trouble by starting agitations. This is the most serious crisis which we have. We have had drought before. But, then, the season previous to it had not been so bad and there were leftovers and there was some moisture in the land, even though it had no rain. But today we face a situation in which the land is absolutely dry; there is no moisture at all in the soil. In some places I saw tall crops standing and I was indeed glad that there was some crop. But when I got down and went near the crop, when I touched the head of the Bajra or whatever it was, there was absolutely nothing in it; it was just *bhoosa*. This is the state of affairs and the Central and State Governments and all the people are making a tremendous effort to face the situation. I cannot say how far we will be successful in facing it. Perhaps we can, to some extent, but the whole situation is of such magnitude that it does need very concerted and united effort. In Bihar the Chief

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* Responding to Shri Vasudevan Nair's remark, "There the Government comes in".

** Replying to a Member's intervention, "Perhaps they said "give us food".

Minister has formed a sort of non-official all-parties committee which is trying to see how it can supplement what the Government is doing. I think in U.P. also they are trying it.

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Well, co-operation is not limited to sitting in a meeting room*. It should be done in the streets and also out in the villages.

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I am glad they are doing it. ** But there are plenty of them running loose and creating trouble.

I think we must take to heart the magnificent response of the people during the drought last season, the work done by the people themselves, and the tremendous job done by the administration, by workers, official and non-official at every level. This is to be repeated in the present situation also.

We have to have tremendous courage in order to face this situation. I have had long talks there with members of certain Opposition parties, with many non-political people, with the Government and the administration. They are doing all that they can do, but we have to see how this effort can be stepped up and speeded up at every level so as to rush to them those things which they are not able to get. With the best of intentions we can not give them the amount of grain which they demand. So, it is a question of seeking how we can achieve equitable distribution. We do have our very limited resources, not only of foodgrains but even of the equipment and other things which we need. We are seeing how everything can be diverted from other States and rushed to these two areas even for a short while. If necessary, those things could be returned to them later.

In this, I think the rest of us who come from places where there is not such a crisis have a big role to play. How could we share the difficulties of these people ? It is obviously not possible, nor is it desirable, for people to go to these areas because that would only be an extra burden there, but we in other towns and cities can organise movements which would give whatever we can spare, and even what we cannot spare, to those areas and help them out, both by way of food and other necessities.

In Bihar they think they may be able to use some engineering and medical students also in the programmes that they have. We need inoculation on a very big scale, new small irrigation projects and so on on a very big scale and it may be possible for students to help out in this and also certainly anybody else who has the requisite knowledge and training. This would give them an idea of the situation and also provide a constructive outlet to their energies.

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* Replying to Shri Hem Barua's observations, "All opposition parties are co-operating with that committee. Only dissident Congress-men are not cooperating with it."

** Responding to a Member's remark, "They are doing it".

This is the time when we must try to convert diversity into opportunity for positive action and build up permanent productive assets. I have stressed the point wherever I have, that where there are just relief works they should not be undertaken just from the point of view of giving something to do to the people but from the point of view of the future, that we should try and do as much as possible which will strengthen the agricultural position later on and enable us to have an effective national distributive system. It is very necessary that this works programme, which is already fairly well organised, is expanded greatly and I hope that it will be done soon.

Another programme, which is still not under way although plans are ready, is for the feeding of children. I hope, this will also be undertaken very soon.

Our food problem is a part of the general and greater problem of poverty and for dealing with the problems of poverty it is essential to have stability and law and order prevailing. There can be no development without tears and hardships. Unless we can prepare our people and we ourselves be prepared to undergo those hardships and difficulties, we cannot only go ahead but we will only be slipping back.

We have put our faith in our plans. There is a great deal of criticism of the plans of very different kinds. The Draft Plan is before the House and hon. Members will give their views on the occasion. Their views will certainly be given the greatest consideration. We fully realise, stress and emphasize the point that the essential effort of the Plan and what the Plan involves must be our own. We cannot take aid for granted, nor are we prepared to seek aid at any price. Therefore I had asked the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission to be ready with ideas to adjust the plans in case the level of our external assistance is not up to expectations or up to our estimates. Whatever happens, we have to make a determined stand and a determined effort to forge ahead.

Our main tasks are increasing production on the agricultural and the industrial sides. Many members who have spoken here have tried to sweep off 19 years as if nothing has happened. I do not want to go into the details of that because this statement has been refuted many a time but it is true that the trend of our industrial production, which was all along rising has had a set back due to shortage of raw materials and due also somewhat to these drought conditions and other events. But I have seen forecasts prepared by the Director General of Technical Development which encourages the belief that in the coming six months there will be a substantial increase in many industries. They have said that it will go up from 10 per cent to 25 per cent and even more in certain areas. Some of the things they have mentioned are heavy machinery, tractors, trucks, bicycles, cement, paper, insecticides and other items.

India simply cannot fail. We are bound in this together. It is not just a question of this government or another government ; it is a question of we simply cannot fail. No nation, when they make up their minds to do a thing and do it together, ever-fails. A stable India is not only necessary for us and our development but is equally necessary for stability in Asia.

Just before I came here, I believe, there were certain allegations made. The hon. Member* who made them had written to me on the 1st and I replied to him the very next day. He had threatened that he would make the statement on the floor of this House and I had suggested to him that in its very nature such a statement might incite communal feeling and, therefore, would he please not make it in public. But I am sorry, he did not have the patience even to wait for a few days.

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We immediately look into anything to which our attention is drawn, but it always takes some time. You cannot be asked a question today and produce an answer within a couple of days, specially when the matter is a State matter and does not really come under the Centre.

One hon. Member said something about there being a conspiracy to keep out steel from Salem. Again, he quoted me and various people are quoting me. Here also, I think my words have been very clear and I have not moved away from them or deviated in any manner. We do want to consider the interests of all States and do not want any single State to suffer; we must diversify our industry, but at this moment, with the difficulties we face—the drought situation and the food situation—it does not seem realistic to me somehow to be planning a steel plant which has no chance of coming up immediately. If it is something that is not coming up in the future, I do not see how it helps to commit today that this will happen here and this will happen there. So, it is not that anything has been shelved or put away. All these things are being considered.

The other day I said in the House that I had drawn the attention of the Planning Commission as to what could be done about this and they, naturally, said that unless the Plan itself is accepted and there is a clearer picture about the Plan, it will not be possible to go into these other matters until then. This did make sense to me and it does not at all mean that we are brushing aside people's feelings. But, as I said earlier, this is no way to ventilate the people's feelings. Today somebody has written to me—I have missed the news in the papers—that a little girl of nine years is fasting somewhere for the Vizag steel plant. You yourself can judge what sort of picture this makes and whether Government can take decisions in this manner and how we can be forced to take decisions in this manner.

Many, members have made comments on our foreign policy with specific reference to the tripartite meeting. They are entitled to criticise, to scrutinise, to analyse and so on. But I do think that when important decisions are taken and the heads of two important States come all the way to our country, we should not try to ridicule and try to belittle the meeting and the decisions taken specially when the results of it cannot unfold immediately and it will take time to show results. In some of the things that are said—they are discernible, if I may put it that way—a hint of certain vested interests and sometimes chauvinism is there. Now, these are matters which we must try and steer clear of.

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* Shri Madhu Limaye.

Last time, when there was this No-Confidence motion, I said that there was an air of unreality. This time, of course, there is even a greater air of unreality because, as you all know, we will be put to the test in a very short time. We have to await the verdict of the people and I am fully confident that our Party will receive a renewed vote of confidence from the people themselves. Ours is a democracy. Let us go to the polls in an atmosphere free from coercion of one form or another. If we wish to maintain democracy, there should be no place for those who wish to abuse democratic freedom to destroy the very basic rights of democracy.

Let us all uphold our democratic system and the Constitution, which we have adopted and let us, as I said earlier, seek the verdict of the people themselves who are the ultimate persons to decide. Let us hold together as a people. Let us uphold the values which we have always cherished. Gandhiji was also telling us that means were as important as ends. This is what we have tried to do. We may fail but it must always be our ideal and, that is—again I come back to the original point that I made—in asking for things, in ventilating our grievances, we must bear this aspect in view that we must act in an Indian way, what is being recognised all over the world as an Indian way, and which has increased India's stature in the world and all the more so when this is a period which is an extremely difficult period for our country. Our President, Dr. Radhakrishnan has, more than once, deplored this mounting tendency to violence and he pointed out how to remove this from the Indian tradition and what danger it imposes on democracy itself. I look to Parliament and to hon. Members to set an example of dignity and decorum and constructive thinking and emphasis on the right priorities.

True Faith in Democracy*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, no-confidence motions have become such a routine that we are not, at any rate I am not, bothered by their frequency except that by their repeated and unsuccessful use their utility will be blunted.

...It is very interesting to listen to speeches here because in each hon. Member's speech one has a glimpse of how he would function in a particular situation, and unfortunately they view our actions in that light. We heard from Shri S.A. Dange a particular exposition; we heard from another Member, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, another type of exposition, which shows the standards which they may use or they maintain. Similarly, we hear the motive attributed to the Congress Party; it may be that those are the motives that their parties have or would have if they were placed in a similar situation. Fortunately, the Congress Party does not suffer from all these things. And what is the proof ? The proof is that today, after being in full power, we still have brought this country to a stage where in many States there are Governments of a non-Congress nature, either headed by separate parties or by coalitions. This in itself is proof that we do not want to cling to power, that we do not want to act undemocratically.

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By the fact that the Congress Party allowed the Constitution to work** (*Interruptions*). I am saying 'allowed' because there are parties in other countries which have a constitution where they have adopted other methods, where they have not functioned like this. This has happened in many countries in the world. So this is not an aspect that we can ignore nor is it good for us to ignore it.

I do not want to go into the details of the Rajasthan situation, because many Members have spoken about it. The constitutional points were very ably dealt with by Shri Shah and Shri Khadilkar. Shri Pahadia gave us the details of the situation. Many other Members have dealt with those points and last, but not least, the Home Minister went into great detail and dealt with the matter in a most able manner. So I do not want to go into those issues again.

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion of No-Confidence in the Council of Ministers, *L.S. Deb.*, 20 March, 1967, cc. 402-09.

** Replying to Shri Samar Guha's comment, "That is not by the grace of the Congress Party, but due to the Constitution."

But I do want to draw your attention to this fact that today there is a changed situation in India. But it is not a sudden change. We seem to think that because there was an election, a sudden change has come about. This change has been a gradual one; it has been coming about little by little, not only in every election, but even in between elections We have been watching the change coming over the people and we have been consistently saying that these are the growing pangs of democracy, that these are the roots which democracy is striking down in our country. And we have encouraged this.

I do not say that in some places there may not have been mistakes. There may have been people who do not want to encourage it. Of course, that must also have happened. But by and large, taking this vast country and its vast population, we have encouraged these forces of democracy. And today we see an entirely new situation.

One of the first things that I did was to extend my hand of cooperation and friendship to the non-Congress Chief Ministers of certain States. I am very happy to say that they responded in a like manner and they have assured me that we can cooperate together. It is not an easy situation, because not only is the economic situation difficult, the food situation difficult, but the whole complexity of this new situation is there. But we will not fail for want of trying. That is the utmost we can say on this issue.

So, I think it is extremely unfair of Members of the Opposition to pick out one instance where things have not gone smoothly. Everywhere else, where there are non-Congress Governments, the transition has been a very smooth and even speedy one. I wish it had been so in Rajasthan also.

There were certain conditions due to which this could not take place. In their speeches, Opposition Members seemed to imply that we intend for all time to have President's rule in Rajasthan or to prevent the Opposition from coming in if they had a majority, which is not so at all. The Home Minister has made it very clear. There were certain conditions created, conditions of violence.

Now, one may agree with the Governor or not. You may agree with what he did or you may not. But the answer is not to take that quarrel out in the streets of Jaipur. This is the only question. I am not blaming any particular person or any particular party. As I told the Maharani when she phoned to me, this is something which when one starts sometimes goes out of control. But a situation did arise where it was felt that it might not be managable; it could have been that nothing might have happened. But had we not acted, had certain incidents taken place afterwards on the 14th, resulting in firing, loss of life and so on, again Opposition Members would have been the first to accuse us and say 'You should have foreseen this. Why did you not take prompt action?'

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The Governor has instituted a judicial inquiry in which all these things will come out. We are all interested to know what is the truth of the matter, but until the report of the inquiry comes out I think it is not right really to lay the blame on one side or another. That is why I did not say anything more about that particular issue.

But I would like to say how deeply grieved I am at the loss of life in Jaipur, and I wou'd like to express my very deep sympathy for the families of those who have lost their lives.

One thing more. Many types of monopolies are talked about in this House. I would like to assure all hon. Members that the Congress Party does not seek a monopoly of power, nor does it think that it has a monopoly of wisdom; in fact, we are opposed to monopolies of all kinds, feudal monopolies, economic monopolies, personal or family monopolies, and even the distressing monopoly of shouting and interrupting of some sections of this House.

As I said, what has happened in Rajasthan has greatly distressed us and it is unfortunate that things developed in this way.

One charge was made by, I think, Mr. Ramamurti, which I must meet, which is that my meetings were arranged by the Government. There are certain security reasons, which I must confess that I personally consider entirely unnecessary, but unfortunately there are certain rules here about security and it is this security aspect which is dealt with by the District Magistrate. He does not organise meeting or anything like that, but even the cost of this is always borne by the party.

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As I said, in six States today we have non-Congress Ministries, and in three of these States the Congress has not lost, the number of Congressmen elected in the Assembly is very much larger than any other single party; nowhere else in the world would that be called a defeat or a loss, it is only here perhaps because you measure it with what the strength was before, that you think that it is a defeat in actual fact it is, you could say, a lessening of the votes, but it is certainly not a defeat. Where there are these non-Congress Governments, we intend to function as responsible and disciplined Opposition, working only for the good of the State. Actually, in Rajasthan also, as you very well know, the Congress is the largest single party. Anyway, I do not want to go into all those matters, and the time also is exceedingly short. I would like to express the earnest hope that at the earliest possible there would be a peaceful atmosphere in Rajasthan.....

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...so that responsible government can be formed as everywhere else in the country, and whichever group or party has majority will be asked to assume this responsibility.

I would beg of all hon. Members of this House to look ahead in the spirit of true faith in democracy.

One point was mentioned by the Maharani, which was that we were afraid because of some enquiry which might be held. You all know that this matter has been discussed in this House, and the Administrative Reforms Commission has made certain recommendations regarding such allegations. We are very anxious to implement these, and we are going into the matter. We had taken it up with the State Governments earlier. Now, of course, we shall discuss the matter with the new Chief Ministers. We do not want to

sleep on this matter; we want to take it up, to see that there is some regular machinery which can go into these allegations, both at the Centre and in the State. So, let us join hands in order to create conditions which would enable us to revoke the President's Proclamation and restore responsible Government in Rajasthan at the earliest possible date. That is what I said in my broadcast. I assure you that, that is what I genuinely feel. It is now a question of all of us trying to work together. Earlier we were always the Government and most of you were on the other side, in the Opposition. Now we are both the Government and the Opposition in a way in different places. Therefore, unless we try to work together, especially where there is a difficult situation, it will not be easy to have smooth functioning and to find a way out of the many problems and difficulties which our country faces. I sincerely hope that we will be able to create this atmosphere of working together and having normal conditions all over the country.

Problems of Growth and Development*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have sat listening with great attention to the speeches which have been made, because nothing is so stimulating as good, sharp criticism. But what have we heard here ? We have heard some wool-gathering in the labyrinth of oft-repeated saws. Very little of what we have heard is new. I have thought that perhaps on the issue of West Bengal the Opposition would be united.

But what did we see ? We heard that Professor Ranga approves of the action and, in fact, thinks that it was overdue.

We find that even before the motion is moved, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee gets up to assure himself that it is not on any specific issue, that it does not in fact specially mention West Bengal. This is the nature of this no-confidence motion. What we have heard, we have heard since I have been this House, I forget how many times. The same old arguments about foreign policy. Not a single new argument has been made...(*Interruptions*). Therefore, there was no sense in having several no-confidence motions tabled at the beginning of the session, then withdrawing them and then two days later feeling that the matter is very urgent and the same things have to be repeated about foreign policy, about economic policy, about food policy and about all other policies.

Hon. Members will have to excuse me if I also repeat myself because obviously the same questions, when the situation remains the same, must have the same answers. I look forward to criticism not only in this House but anywhere. As I said before, I find it most stimulating. In a motion of no-confidence, what is it that we look for ? We look for some alternative policy, some broad framework at least of an alternative policy, which the Government can follow. But when we find not one alternative policy but as many alternative policies as there are parties, and sometimes as there are Members in the same party, then I very humbly submit that there is not much sense in such no-confidence motions. In fact, the only thing which hon. Members in the Opposition have in common is some kind of a conditioned reflex which comes into action at the very mention of the word 'Congress'.

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Our hon. friend, Professor Ranga, was so impatient to hit out at me that he did not bother to wait to ascertain his facts. He accused me of going to Moscow for—I am going

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of No-Confidence in the Council of Ministers, *L.S. Deb.*, 24 November, 1967, cc. 2732-43.

to quote his words—"the 50th anniversary of their Communist Party". These were his words. Actually, I was invited and I accepted the invitation to attend the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Soviet State which even Professor Ranga in this very same speech, very generously permitted me to do, saying—again I quote his words—"the Prime Minister should have gone for the 50th anniversary of the Socialist Republic". The invitation was a specially warm one from a friendly neighbour with whom we have very close relations.

This is but one example that I am quoting of the incorrect statements and vague generalisations which are constantly being made by hon. Members of the Opposition without any regard for accuracy.

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That is beside the point.* I am glad hon. Member thinks that there are Congress governments in other parts of the world! In one thing they are correct, that there are governments which are friendly to the Congress Government in India.

I went to the Soviet Union in the same spirit as our President went to attend the Centenary celebrations of Canada. And we propose, no matter how many people from the Opposition shout about this matter, to adhere to this civilised practice and not to be misled by out-of-date, cold war attitudes. Indeed, if this world had accepted or had adhered to this cold-war way of thinking, there would be today no hot lines....(*Interruptions*).

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As I said, there would be today no hot lines, there would today be no meetings at Warsaw nor would there be other contacts which nations must maintain with friends and foes.

In the last General Elections, governments of many different views emerged. This House is aware that I welcomed the emergence of these governments, I welcomed them publicly, and I welcomed them in my meetings with the Chief Ministers. It was not motivated by any narrow party motivation. I felt confident that our federal system would respond to the changed political situation and, in fact, I did every thing I could to discourage any attempt to topple these governments. Not only I as the Prime Minister, but I can also speak for all my colleagues, that in their respective departments they did their best to allow these governments not only to function effectively but to help them in every way that they could, because we believed that in so doing democracy would be strengthened. If all their demands could not be met, it was not that we did not wish to meet them but it was because of our very genuine difficulties, lack of resources, lack of foodgrains, lack of many other things. These difficulties were faced not merely by the non-Congress governments, they were faced equally by governments of the Congress Party, who were blaming us equally for not looking after their interests. We have been blamed on the floor of the House and outside for paying more attention to the non-Congress governments and not looking after the people in the Congress States because they do not make a noise about their difficulties.

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* Replying to Shri Bal Raj Madhok's remark, "Was there the head of any other non-Communist Government ?"

What did we see on the other side ? The non-Congress Governments were consistently trying to blame the Centre for anything which went wrong. The effort to make this different party system work was supposed to be entirely one-sided; it was only on the side of the Congress, the Central Government, that we were to make every effort to see that things went smoothly while, on their side, they could say what they liked, when they liked and on whatever occasion they found suitable to make comments against the Congress governments, whether that was the occasion for such a comment or not.

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Therefore, the effort to pull together was entirely one-sided and we saw the leaders of the State Governments often holding conventions to bring down the Congress governments in the States and in the Centre, openly, without any secrecy or anything.

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We saw minimum programmes, strange alliances, coalitions and all other combinations healthy and unhealthy. But we wanted the people to judge for themselves. We still hold to that policy. But when the internal stresses and strains within coalition governments produce disarray and conflict, then the Centre should not be treated as a scapegoat for all the troubles that might arise from them.

I must admit that political defections of the kind which we have marred our political life have tended to bring democratic processes to disrepute. All of us who have the well-being of the country and of democracy at heart cannot but feel deep concern that representatives elected on a particular party platform, on a particular party ideology, should with such ease and facility, cross over and re-cross without even making the effort of explaining what political principles were involved in such defections.

All of us, on whatever side of the House, cannot but deplore this. I think, it is pointless to apportion blame as to who started this, when, how or where. Let us look now to the future and deal with this in a manner so as to strengthen our democratic institutions.

Now, certain allegations have been made about West Bengal. Just now before I was to speak, you, Mr. Speaker, informed us that we would get some latest information and I listened very carefully to the two or three Members who spoke just before me. But I found that, far from giving any information, they were expressing certain opinions. (*Interruption*). Prof. Mukerjee did ask one question as to whether we knew about a particular communication, which he mentioned. I must confess that I have no information about this.

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Mr. Samar Guha made a very excited speech, but in the course of that speech, as you perhaps have noticed, he himself remarked that his group was preparing to fight the anti-national forces in the united front. These are not my words ; these are the words which the House heard just five minutes ago from Mr. Samar Guha. (*Interruption*) Who, Sir, has

been advocating violence in West Bengal ? Not now when these incidents have taken place, but for months! We have all been reading the speeches reported in the newspapers. Mr. Samar Guha has obviously far more inner information about this matter than those of us who have been seeing only newspaper reports. We have read such things as a Minister saying that those who defected would be skinned alive....(*Interruptions*).

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Newspapers*.

I might add that perhaps we also share some of the sources which Mr. Samar Guha has at his disposal.

My colleague, Prof. D.C. Sharma, was trying to read out Mr. Ajoy Mukerjee's statement. I wish he had been allowed to do so because it is very illuminating. I would very much have liked to do so myself, but the time is short and, therefore, I shall read only a sentence of it. (*Interruptions*). In this statement, Mr. Ajoy Mukerjee clearly stated that the Left Communists' allegation of a "desperate conspiracy" is baseless. I should like to remind the House that this is not the statement which he made on the eve of his resignation or, rather, proposed resignation, but it is the speech which he made on the 16th October, after he had decided to continue in Government. Please note the difference in date. In that he says :

"....a wing of a political party is openly inviting China to help the party in bringing about an armed revolution...."

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...."starting in West Bengal. Such a tendency should be nipped in the bud. Unfortunately, I got opposition in this matter even from some of my friends in the United Front."

Sir, I must state that I am not happy at what is happening; in fact, I am exceedingly sad. I have great admiration for the people of Bengal. In the history of India's resurgent renaissance they have played a unique and distinctive role. They have given us our top leaders in many fields—in politics, in science, in literature, in art and in religion. They have given us our national anthem. I have no doubt that....(*Interruptions*)....they will be able to go through these difficulties and that they will, as in the past, once again march towards progress in peaceful condition.

Sir, I do not wish to go further into this matter because it was dealt with in detail by the Deputy Prime Minister yesterday and it has also been dealt with during the last two or three days by the Home Minister. (*Interruptions*).

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* Replying to Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu's question, "What is the source of information ?"

The purpose of our Constitution is to provide a Government which preserves and promotes peace and order, a Government dedicated to the rule of law... (*Interruptions*)... and the welfare of the people.

Some Members even in this House, even in the course of this debate, have talked of violence. I would appeal to them not to indulge in such talk.

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Shri Dange even talked of '*gheraoing*' the High Court. Violence will not achieve any ends. There is no provision in the Constitution substituting orderly processes by mob violence in the streets. It is the duty of us all or to resist such violence.

Sir, I was also disturbed when some Members, perhaps in the excitement of the debate, made what I can only call, somewhat irresponsible observations regarding our Army and what happened in Pakistan and so on. These, Sir, I submit, are the voices of despair. They are the voices of those who lack confidence in India and her people. They are the voices of those who do not believe in the validity of our democratic system. I have tremendous faith in the maturity and wisdom of the Indian people. I have confidence also in the valour and very high patriotism of our fighting forces. (*Interruptions*).

I deplore that they should be dragged into a political debate of this kind. (*Interruptions*).

I referred to the patriotic valour of our fighting forces. Does the hon. Member deny our fighting forces, their patriotic valour ?

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As I have already mentioned in the beginning, all the old views repeated many times on our foreign policy were again expressed in the course of this debate and specially, by the mover* of the motion. Sir, how much India is respected or India's views are respected, cannot be judged by those who are completely cut off from the realities of the international situation...

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...but by what attention is paid to our views in the councils of the world and the importance that is attached to our statements by the leaders of foreign countries.

I strongly repudiate the statement made by Shri Madhu Limaye, which I consider irresponsible and false, regarding what I have said about Vietnam in various capitals. At no time has there been any inconsistency in my views on the Vietnam conflict, and I have always expressed them very frankly, no matter where I have gone.

The Government of India's policy is to live in freedom, political freedom and economic freedom, and we wish the same for others. That is why in all forums we have been against colonialism, racialism and other forms of domination.

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* Shri Madhu Limaye.

We are against interference in our internal affairs, and in the same way, we are against interference in other people's internal affairs.

After political independence, economic independence is a must for us. The world is divided into rich and poor countries, and the gap is a widening one. We must, therefore, reconstruct the economic order so that an orderly transfer of resources is possible to enable developing countries to increase their rate of growth.

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For this, we want no charity, but opportunity for larger economic co-operation.

Some hon. Members made reference to our economic situation and our development plans. The Deputy Prime Minister* yesterday did touch upon this subject. It is not a fact that planning has been abandoned. The Planning Commission has been reconstituted, and is giving a fresh look to the problems facing the country and is considering ways and means for stabilising and reviving the economy in a planned manner. It is proposed to take up the work of the Fourth Plan in January, 1968 after the completion of the annual plan for 1968-69.

Due to the very difficult economic conditions in the last two years, of which hon. Members are well aware, and particularly because of the unprecedented drought, our industrial activity, national economic growth and demand were adversely affected. Prices went up and resources seriously rapped.

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This threw the economy out of gear. It is hoped that with the revival of agriculture, the process of rehabilitation and growth will catch up and that we shall soon progressively go up the ladder of planned economic growth.

I should like to point out that sometimes when we talk about our country, we tend to see it in isolation; we want certain ideal conditions for our country. We do not take cognizance of the experience of history and of other parts of the world. In the whole course of human history, it can be seen that in no country had the economy shown a continuous upward swing, not even in the best organised or even in the most advanced countries.

There are always ups and downs, and there are very often backward movements. If we had drought or recession, these are problems which should be dealt with on the plane of constructive criticism. If we were to lose heart at the first taste of such a reverse on the economic front which is caused by factors often out of our control, there would be little inducement to go on working and struggling.

Against the long and rather repetitive list of charges and failures, brought out by hon. Members of the Opposition which have not even been substantiated, let me say something about what we have been able to achieve in this short time.

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* Shri Morarji Desai.

When the Government took office in March this year, the country was facing the bleak prospect of famine. There was an acute food shortage in many states and we had the tremendous task of providing food to over 500 million people. Never before in history has any government had to meet such a gigantic challenge. Yet we faced it boldly and with courage.

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The general elections brought about State Governments which were not wholly cohesive. They were in opposition to the Party in power at the Centre. But we collaborated with them fully to meet the challenge of starvation. Whatever else may be said by members on the other side, they cannot say that we did not succeed. Their own colleagues in the States have borne testimony to our success in saving millions of lives.

The failure of the crops had placed a tremendous strain on the economy. Our resources were taxed to the maximum to import food. The buying power of our people went down, prices went up, unemployment had risen and we were in the midst of a recession. It cannot be said now that we are out of the woods; certainly not. We face a difficult situation, but I feel we have turned the corner. Our crop prospects are good, cash crops are also comparatively plentiful, prices are levelling out and exports, I see from statistics, are picking up (*Interruptions*). Of course, nature has been bountiful this season. But let us not forget that we have also laboured hard to increase our agricultural yields. New types of seeds and fertilisers, better irrigation, all have greatly contributed to this improved picture. All I can say is that whether it was in the political field or in the economic field, this Government has acted firmly and courageously to meet the challenges that came up and to fulfill its responsibilities towards the people, I have no doubt that when the time comes, the people will judge us kindly.

I was surprised to hear an old argument from Shri Prakash Vir Shastri. I doubt if this particular argument has been used in any other parliament of the world. The blame for the Opposition not being strong here is put on us, on the Government. Is it not a little amusing that amongst our many tasks is also the one to undertake to strengthen the Opposition ?

One other Member mentioned something about slowing down of rail movement. I can assure him this : I know that it has been slowed down. But this is something which was done one whole year ago. It has been slowed down for various reasons. Obviously, I do not have time here to go into all the details. But many of these questions have been asked before and full answers have been given. If they have not been, questions can always be asked again.

I should like, as I conclude to appeal to Members on both sides of the House to rise above the immediate and to think in terms of the larger perspective of history. We have entered the third decade of freedom. One half of the nation has been born after we have become free. They have, therefore, no knowledge of what bondage meant nor of the struggle to break through that bondage. What do we want them to feel ? What sort of picture do we want to give them of freedom ? Do we want them to think that feedom is merely the

greed for power ? Or do we want them to feel proud of their heritage and have some hope in their future?

Criticism, as I said, is welcome. But let us not try to check the springs of confidence. We have a tremendous job ahead of us and in the next five or ten years we can realise the fruits of our investments, our investment in development, our investment in democracy. It is in these coming years that we can become self-reliant, and, Sir, I am confident that we shall become self-reliant.

Let not history record that this group of legislators spent their time in bickering and denigration and forget to water the roots of confidence and hope.

With these words, I need hardly add that I ask this hon. House to reject the motion.

India and Pakistan : The Kutch Award*

...Mr. Deputy Speaker, actually the Government's point of view has been stated very clearly and cogently by my colleague, the Deputy Prime Minister**, yesterday. So it is not that I am making any new pronouncement just now. I want to say that I welcome this discussion and the opportunity we have had to deliberate on various aspects of this award and the agreement, and I am grateful to the hon. Members for the level of the debate. It is natural that there should be differences in our points of view and in our convictions, but it is not right for any hon. Member to claim a monopoly of patriotism which some of our hon. friends opposite have tried to do. Even when we differ with them we do not attribute motives to their remarks or their reasonings and arguments. We expect the same from them. We, on this side, have had a long record of service to the nation and we are second to none in our determination to uphold national honour and to work for the welfare of our people. We do not wear our patriotism on our sleeves so to speak.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, you will appreciate that when we are called upon to form a government, to provide a government, we are compelled to face the hard facts of life. We cannot escape into emotion nor can we lay the blame on others and escape our responsibility. The approach of the Government, as I said earlier, was made very clear yesterday by the Deputy Prime Minister, and this morning my colleague the Home Minister*** also has spoken.

When all is said and the patriotic fervour and emotion spent in very legitimate expression, we are left with the fact that the freely elected government of this country entered into an agreement, an international agreement.**** That agreement was placed before both Houses of Parliament which endorsed it by an overwhelming majority. I cannot understand how a democracy can function unless the Members are prepared to accept majority decisions. That is the whole point of democratic functioning. Nor can I understand the logic of the argument that the decision reached by Parliament, by a majority, is not binding on us all.

A few hon. Members have argued that we can retreat from our obligation to implement the decision of the Tribunal, and references have been made by some hon. Members to

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion of No-Confidence in the Council of Ministers, *L.S. Deb*, 28 February, 1968, cc. 448-54.

** Shri Morarji Desai.

*** Shri Y.B. Chavan.

**** Swaran Singh–Sheikh Agreement.

what they have called the compulsions of international public opinion. Naturally, we do not ignore international public opinion in many matters, but where national interest is concerned we think that it is national interest which must come before everything else, and I should like to assure the House that international opinion is certainly not the guiding factor in whatever decision the Government has taken. What is important is that India should not do anything which is not right and proper. The Government must honour its commitments which is that the decision of the Tribunal—and I am now speaking in quotes, a single sentence which has been quoted by other hon. Members,—"shall be binding on both the governments and shall not be questioned on any grounds whatsoever". Many hon. Members who have spoken from the Opposition, even though they have disagreed with us on other matters, have supported this view.

The Tribunal had to determine the boundary alignment, and I might add that the alignment claimed by India has been substantially accepted. The opinion of the Chairman of the Tribunal, which was concurred in by Judge Entezam, contains the following sentence:

"It might be added that the boundary proposed by me for the greater part of its length roughly coincides with the boundary proposed by my learned colleague, Mr. Bebler."

I cannot say that I am satisfied with the Award. I expressed my views the other day when I made a statement. I entirely agree with what the Home Minister said a little earlier. However, our natural disappointment at having succeeded only to the extent of 90 per cent, and not 100 per cent as we would naturally have liked, should not colour our judgement as to where our duty lies. We propose to honour our international commitment in the earnest hope that the settlement of this issue will close an unfortunate chapter of conflict and promote the development of normal relations between these two neighbouring countries.

The assertion by some hon. Members that the dispute between India and Pakistan did not exist is somewhat strange. How can hon. Members forget that there was not only a dispute but that there were bilateral talks about it and there was even a conflict ? Since these failed to produce the desired results, the matter was referred to arbitration with the approval of our Parliament. I should like to recall the words of the late Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, as to what the Tribunal was meant to do and has done. He had stated :

"I would, at this stage, like to explain why the agreement referred both to the determination and demarcation of the boundary. It has been the Government of India's consistent stand that the boundary in question is already well established and officially settled and that what remains to be done is its demarcation on the ground. On this point, however, Pakistan has had a difference of opinion with us. Pakistan's contention has been that the boundary is yet to be determined. This difference had to be resolved either by negotiations or by reference to an impartial tribunal."

He went on to say :

"Once the boundary has been determined in this manner, the next step of demarcation on the ground will be taken."

The Tribunal has now determined the boundary alignment, and I should like to express our appreciation of Judge Bebler's fine judgement. I should also like to place on record Government's thanks to Secretary-General, U Thant for the help provided to the Tribunal by the United Nations and, finally, I should like to express our deep appreciation of the services rendered by all our eminent counsels and concerned officials. They have worked with great thoroughness and a deep sense of devotion and those who read the entire report of the Award will be impressed by their work.

Some hon. Members referred to the views of the hon. Member, Shri N. Chatterjee. He is away in the Andamans. But when he heard certain radio reports of the views expressed he sent me a telegram. He has stated that the terms of the cease-fire agreement between India and Pakistan definitely commit them to two things—acceptance of the Award by both the countries and execution of the Award by the Tribunal in the event of any difficulty in the actual delineation of the boundary as declared by the Tribunal. He has further added that the presentation of India's case was both comprehensive and cogent and full justice was done to India's case by the members of the Indian Delegation.

The hon. Member, Shri Pashabhai Patel, has spoken of the possibility of the utilisation of the Narmada project in reclamation work in Kutch. The position is that the Narmada Water Resources Development Committee has recommended a master plan for the optimum and integrated development of the water resources of the river Narmada. This envisages the irrigation of 4 lakhs of acres in the little Rann and 4.5 lakhs of acres in the Great Rann of Kutch. I appreciate the constructive suggestion made by the hon. Member. Now that the Award has settled the boundary, we should get down to work and develop this area so that it can also contribute to the prosperity of the country.

The debate has raised the general issue of our relations with Pakistan. Shri Madhok contended that we could never have good relations with Pakistan. This at best, is a counsel of despair. The Government cannot proceed on the presumption of perpetual hostility. However distant the prospect might be of fashioning our relations with Pakistan so that they become peaceful, normal and friendly and however tortuous the route, it must always be our endeavour to work constantly to make Pakistan realise that its interests too lie in friendly and co-operative relations with India.

I was glad to find that there was an understanding among some hon. Members of the Opposition that as a Government we must take a responsible and reasonable position in the matter of Indo-Pakistan relations.

Some hon. Members have expressed concern regarding the defence and security of this important border area. I quite appreciate their concern and also, of course, the concern specially of the people of Gujarat. Once the Kutch boundary has been delineated after this award, no one should be in any doubt that border, like any other border of the country, shall be defended by the combined strength of the nation and by the valour of our valiant armed forces.

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...Although the motion brought before the House purports to be a general one, the debate, in fact, has centred around the Kutch Award almost exclusively and very few other points were raised. Anyhow, I have dealt with most of the economic and other matters just a few days ago when I was replying to the debate on the President's Address. Hon. Members have talked of the unity and the integrity of the country. As I just now mentioned, we do not call their patriotism into question. I believe that they are sincerely concerned with these important questions and that is why I draw their attention to these issues time and time again.

I was very glad to hear hon. Member, Shri Krishnamoorthy, denounce the burning of the national flag in Coimbatore, Madurai and other places and the insult to the national anthem on another occasion. What has happened, whether in Coimbatore or in Madurai or in Assam, is naturally something which saddens us all. I sincerely hope that the misguided young people will realise the folly of their actions and that all responsible leaders, no matter to what party they belong, will join together to uphold the dignity of our national emblems.

All movements, all attitudes which create tension or fissiparous tendencies or separatist feelings, whether they are between people who speak different languages or live in different States or whether they are between people who profess different religions, castes and creeds, must be put down strongly. It is only then that we can build a firm base from which we can defend and strengthen our unity and our integrity.

Unity of the Country*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is after a long time that we have a motion of No-Confidence which is on some specific issues. Even though such motions have become matters of routine, which was what my hon. friend Shri H.N. Mukerjee objected to, if you have them on specific issues it is certainly better than the usual omnibus ones. Although the motion is on specific issues there were many hon. Members, and some parties, who did not want to join in the censure motion, but they still took the opportunity to bring in issues of their own which had been deliberately left out by the movers of the motion.

First of all, I would like to congratulate all those who have succeeded in these elections. We would certainly have liked our Congress colleagues to win but we accept the verdict of the electorate. And those who are sitting in this House or in the Assemblies should not feel that we resent their presence. On the contrary, we welcome them and we hope they will make valuable contribution to the debates and the work of this House and of the various Assemblies.

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Somebody said "very kind of you".** Certainly, I am always kind. I will take this opportunity to congratulate them.

I do not know why Shri Vajpayee is hiding behind there. I was very unhappy about what he said yesterday. He said that I had abused his party during the elections, but I am glad to say that he took the right attitude with regard to abuses namely, that he did not mind abuses. However, I would like to make it very clear that I did not abuse his party or any others. I did not abuse, but I did speak very strongly about certain aspects, not only concerning his party but with regard to other parties also, which to my mind were not in the national interest.

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Well, I will come to that point later.***

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion of No-Confidence in the Council of Ministers, *L.S. Deb.*, 20 February, 1969, cc. 206-23.

** A Member intervened to say, "Very kind of you".

*** Responding to Shri S. M. Banerjee's remark, "Except the Congress".

It was with regard to communalism. I do not want to deal with that matter now. I will come to that also later. In respect of Jan Sangh, I said we are not against Jan Sangh; nor did I tell anybody not to vote for Jan Sangh. But I did appeal to the public that in respect of the parties which had certain postures which were not conducive to national peace, harmony and unity, the public themselves should make these parties understand that this attitude must be discarded. On that I spoke strongly. I did not speak strongly against any particular party but against what I considered was a wrong attitude, and I certainly spoke very strongly about that.

Now I do not really have to say anything against the hon. Member, Shri Dandeker. It was a little amusing to see what paper he chose to quote from, because we all know that amongst the newspapers which appear in England, *The Daily Express* is one which has been consistently anti-Indian. During our freedom struggle, after our freedom struggle, whether we were fighting with Pakistan or whatever we were doing, it has taken a very consistent anti-Indian stand, and it was a little amusing that of all the newspapers which appeared there, he should have chosen this particular one from which to quote.

The main question raised by the mover of the motion was with regard to the Senas. When I spoke just now about the Jan Sangh, and in all the speeches I made a point not only to speak against the communal point of view, in an anti-communal stance, but also against any kind of attitude which promoted casteism, regionalism or parochialism which could make anybody who was an Indian citizen feel that he did not enjoy equal rights with any other citizen, regardless of where he was living. He might not be living at a place today but he might like to live there tomorrow. Today he may be living in Delhi, but tomorrow he may want to live in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal or somewhere else. Every Indian citizen must have that freedom.

I do not know what to say. We use strong words on all occasions and sometimes when we really want to stress something, we have to use the same words. What has happened recently in Bombay, what has happened between the people of Telengana and Andhra, or what has happened in other parts of India, is certainly most deplorable and absolutely indefensible.

I have spoken out very strongly against Shiv Sena and all such senas on various occasions, and I have absolutely no hesitation in saying here also that such movements constitute a very serious threat to the development, progress and unity of the country.

Yesterday the Home Minister dealt at length with the unfair charge that there had been either inaction or neglect in this matter by the State Government or by the Centre. It is not always easy to decide when action is to be taken. Sometimes when you take action a little earlier, it provokes agitation and the hon. Members are the first to ask "Why was action taken merely when a person had said something, but actually nothing had been done ?" So, it is very difficult, sitting at a distance, to judge the time for taking action. I am very clear in my mind that, apart from this incident–and I want also to assure the many Members of the Opposition who took up this point yesterday–we must not think that the matter is over. We have now to consider how this should be dealt with. But this is not a matter which

can be dealt with only by Government. This is a matter in which we must all do some heart-searching among ourselves....(*Interruption*).

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Certainly it is a responsibility of the Government but in the state of affairs and the politics of the country as they are today, I think, every party plays an important role.* Previously other parties were not in government and they could perhaps say that they had nothing to do with such issues, but now every party has a hand in government. Some of them have it today; some may not have it today. But it is not only a question of being in government; the question is when you find a solution what attitude will the people take, because if any party decides then to exploit the situation no matter how good the solution may be it cannot be a lasting solution and it can only bring forth new problems. This is what has been happening. Many solutions have been found but somehow the question gets re-opened. There are many in our country–we cannot deny it–who do feel very much emotionally involved whenever it is a question of community, region, language or caste. Conditions in the modern world are such that it is somewhat natural because people want things, and there are not enough things to go round. Therefore matters like caste, region and so on are exploited.

I am very sorry that the name of one of our great and lion-hearted heroes has been associated with such a movement. I had the privilege of having part of my education in the part of the country where Shivaji operated, that is, Poona, and most of our excursions and so on were to some of the old forts which he captured. I grew up to regard him as a national hero and not as a Maharashtrian hero or as a hero of a particular region. Although I have not been connected in the same way with Sardar Lachit of Assam, he also had a great name in our history. These are people who belong to the nation and I think that it is very unfortunate that their names should in any way be associated with movements which are limited to a very small or particular part of the country.

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Obviously it is the Sena that is using his name.** His name should be for all-India movements which go towards building up the country and making the country greater.

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Bombay is a cosmopolitan city. All these big cities have been built by many communities. People from different parts of the country have brought in their money, their industry and their talent. This is how these cities have grown and prospered and any movement which aims at shutting out anybody from them will result in bringing the cities down; instead of their rising and growing and adding to the general strength of the country, they will become much narrower in character.

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* Replying to Shri Ranga's observations, "What is the contribution of Government ? You have taken up the responsibility".

** Replying to Shri Piloo Mody's question, "Who did that ?"

I would like to make one brief point in passing and that is, in all such debates, some hon. Members have a great deal to say about the police and we talk about them as if the police belongs to some other country. Now, they may behave well or not well but they are Indians. Most of them are from relatively poor families also. They do not come from the top families or from what are called the 'exploiting classes' as some people call them. We all have to help in creating an atmosphere where they can have a more positive attitude and a more friendly attitude. I think, this also is the responsibility of all of us. Much has changed already. The police training is not as it was. There is a constant effort made to see that they view their job not only as a law and order job but also of helping the people.

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No, I am certainly not satisfied*. We have had plenty to say about that in this House. The Home Minister spoke about it. We have spoken about it in the House and outside. That is not the only occasion. There have been other occasions also which are not satisfactory. There are times when they lose their heads, or certain individuals amongst them lose their heads. That happens amongst many other people also, not only amongst the police.

All that I am trying to say is that these issues should not be exploited for narrow party loyalties nor used for mutual recrimination or blaming one another. These are, as many Members have pointed out, larger national issues and we must all do some heart-searching about them.

I was deeply touched by the manner in which the hon. Member, Shri Nath Pai, spoke yesterday because he, obviously, felt the matter very deeply and he was speaking with great emotion. We share that emotion and that deep distress. As I said, unless we raise these matters to a higher level, it will not be possible to solve them. I do not wish to indulge in any accusations because I am fully aware that these narrow-minded elements of one kind or the other do exist amongst us all. Perhaps, no party is free from them. But some parties have stressed various points. For instance, as I said earlier, the Jan Sangh has a point of view about minorities which I do not think is in the interest of the unity of the country. Then, we have other parties here who think that only some of the people are "people" and the others are somebody else. It is not being made clear at all as to who the others are. If they are not people of the country, who are they, where can they go, if they leave the country ?

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As I said earlier, there are still many people in the country who do fall prey to feelings of communalism, casteism, regionalism, etc. I have not said, neither during the elections nor in this House nor anywhere else, that the Congress Party is perfect. But we have made a constant effort to try and fight these divisive tendencies from the beginning. We do not deny them....

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* Responding to Shri M.L. Sondhi's question, "Are you satisfied with that the police did in the Indraprastha Bhavan?"

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So, the question is of seeing how, if this kind of feelings persist in the country, we can see that, instead of their being exploited, they are channelised in a direction where they add to national strength....

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Government has done many things*. I do not think that I am expected now to take each item and say what the Government has done in the matter. Usually, when something has happened, each matter has been taken up for discussion and the Home Minister or whoever is in charge has dealt with it in great detail and every Member, or at least many Members, have been given full opportunity of expressing their views. This is not the time to go into those details....

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Unless we agree on the philosophy, it is very difficult to go on. The major philosophy to be now agreed upon is whether all parties represented in the House do consider this as a national problem and are, therefore, willing to help in its solution. This is the philosophy that has to be agreed upon. Government can, and does, deal with it through many methods. I have been in constant touch with the Chief Ministers of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh throughout these days, trying to find out what has been happening from day to day and what other measures could be taken. They are doing all they can. There are many problems which are not solved. I am not saying that all the problems are solved. But whenever any solution is found–there is no solution which can please everybody–, there is always room for creating a movement or creating a feeling or rousing emotion or rousing passions among the people to exploit whatever is not to their liking. That is why I am asking for the co-operation of all parties. There are many matters in which some of us are not involved; the people of some States are involved; there are other matters in which the people of other States are involved....

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I had not thought of replying to such a point, but I do want to say that the whole House is aware that I am living, and quite happily living, in an exceedingly small house. But I do not think that it is the right house as permanent residence for a Prime Minister mainly because of the inconvenience which it causes to the people who come to visit the Prime Minister; I am not only talking of high dignitaries but also of all Members of Parliament. I might say that Members of Parliament from almost all parties–not the hon. Member's Party but many other parties–have complained to me.... (*Interruptions*)

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* Replying to Shri Ranga who wanted to know the positive contribution of the Government towards maintaining law and order.

The proposal is not to build a large house but to build a house which will be functional for the duties of the Prime Minister of this great country.

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I think the hon. Member had not heard what I had said. I said 'permanent residence'.*

In the course of the debate it was perhaps natural that a lot should be said about the mid-term elections. In a democracy, parties do go up and do go down also. There is nothing strange about this. Yet, we seem to get very excited every time one seat goes here or goes there. The non-Congress parties are not used to winning. So, naturally, when they win, there is a great deal of excitement. We also are not used to losing; so, when we lose we also have a good deal of excitement.

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It is time now that we take democracy in its stride, and we welcome those who win and sympathise with those who do not win.

The political scene has changed. I think it is ridiculous to say, as some hon. Members have said, that nothing has been done for the last 20 years. Just before I started speaking, it was the tail end of the Question Hour, and I came into the House just in time to see here an hon. Member from the Swatantra Party talking about the improved economic picture, the going up of exports....

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Whether the hon. Member from the Swatantra Party or the Jan Sangh would like to believe it or not,** the economic picture has improved. It has not improved a very great deal but it has improved and it has improved after a great deal of hardship and very many hardships which the country faced. As the President has rightly said in his Address, it is not the Government alone which has faced all these difficulties, but it is the people of India, and I think that every time we make these remarks that nothing has changed, we are casting aspersions not merely on the Government but really on the people of India who have faced these difficulties with tremendous courage and endurance.

Recently, during these elections, I had the opportunity of going to many villages. Of course, no one will deny that there is poverty in this country, but no one will deny also that there have been vast changes, changes not only on the visible tangible things that one can see–these are also there–but changes in the outlook of the people. I do not want to depend upon the verdict of foreigners, but quite often our friends opposite are quoting from them. Recently, there was somebody who had lived in a certain village about seventeen years ago and who had worked there. He has returned there now and has now spoken about the many changes which have come about. This village is not one where there is any special

* Replying to Shri Bal Raj Madhok who wanted to know whether the residence of the Prime Minister would change whenever the Prime Minister changed.

** Responding to some Members' remarks, "He was from the Jan Sangh and not from the Swatantra Party...".

programme or any special effort. It is just one of the ordinary villages of North India, and it is not a village in one of the advanced States like Punjab or any other State which is advanced in agriculture or in anything else.

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What has changed the people ? It is democracy which has changed them. It is development which has changed them. It is progress which has changed them, and we have brought about these changes. We have to take cognizance of the fact that this has brought about an entire change in the outlook of the people because there is today a whole new post-Independence generation which takes freedom for granted, not only national freedom but freedom of speech and all the other freedoms that we have...

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They want the benefits of science and technology. They have new problems. They are facing new challenges and they seek new answers to them. I do not think that this is our failure. I think it is our success that the people to day are giving up their old sense of resignation and apathy. Today, they have new problems and they are seeking new answers and they are out to get them, and in that process they will try out many things; they may make mistakes; they may do something which we may not consider right, but nevertheless, they have the freedom to do it, and we accept that freedom. We certainly do not want our people to be resigned to poverty or want or to any of the other difficulties to which they are subject now. But we know that all those things cannot be done suddenly.

I am not saying that there are no regional disparities. We do know that in every State, even in the so-called advanced States, there are pockets which are economically backward and where much needs to be done. We are making an effort in the Plan to see how it can be done. But it cannot be done even in the range of a plan because the problem is far too large.

I think it was Shri George Fernandes who had made some remarks about illiteracy. I have got the census figures in regard to how literacy has grown. I am sorry that paper has got mixed up and I do not find it just now, but I am willing to send the information to him later. Again, I might say that I am saying this not because I am complacent or satisfied; I am not, I do not think that any of us can afford to be satisfied. But it is not right to keep on repeating that nothing has been done. I can say that things are being done, but they are not sufficient, and much more has to be done and that is a position with which nobody will quarrel.

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A tremendous deal has been done for those who are willing to see*; but if he keeps his eyes closed, it does not matter what amount of progress has been made...

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* Replying to Shri Kanwarlal Gupta's question, "How much has been done?"

Yesterday, the Home Minister expressed our view by wishing well to the Opposition and to all the non-Congress Governments that may come into being and he added our wish that the United Front might also be able to keep their unity, whatever their friends, and whatever their views and mixed persuasions may be. We know that last time they were not able to stand the weight of their unity. I hope that now their friends are even larger in number and the weight is even greater they will have the strength and broad enough shoulders to keep them.

I have said this on various occasions and I would like to repeat it here that we offer full co-operation to all those who have been elected and all the Governments which have come or will come into being. The Government of India will deal fairly with all the States. Here, you must realise that it is not only the non-Congress States that think we are unfair, but it is also the Congress States that think so, and that is due to something which is beyond our control, namely the very limited resources at our disposal. But within those limited resources, we shall certainly do whatever we can. Certainly, I must say here that whatever the Members of the various parties may say on the floor of the House, some of their leaders who were Chief Ministers in the States have tried to be helpful and co-operative, but of course on some matters they have not been, and I am sure the hon. Members are fully aware of this also.

The Centre does want to co-operate. But co-operation is not so easy when it is unilateral. In this, we have to sit together. We do expect some co-operation from the State Governments also, specially on matters which concern not only that Government but have repercussions in other parts of the country. So I sincerely hope that since we are looking at some of these problems from the much larger national point of view, we will also keep this in view as to how we can co-operate. Hon. Members have remarked, the political picture has changed and we have to see how to keep the unity of the country in this changing picture where there are governments of different persuasion in different States which have to work together, to keep the country together. This can only be if we all sit together and find some way of co-operation. It may be that you cannot do it all at once but if every party would like to lay stress on its own points then again it will be very difficult to keep the different States together.

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It is enough if the Chief Ministers decide, not all of us.*

Talking of elections again, this time also there were many prophecies about them, but our people have belied the prophecies of cynics and prophets of doom. The House is aware that there was even an attempt to boycott the elections. Nevertheless, a large number of people did participate and only in 28 out of a lakh odd stations was a repoll found necessary.

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* Replying to Shri S.M. Banerjee's suggestion, "Let us all decide".

I think we should take satisfaction from these results which do not belong to one party or another but to the great people of India and to this great country.

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The matter of corruption also has been repeatedly discussed*. It is not limited to any one part of the country or another.

*** *** ***

We have said repeatedly that wherever there is something wrong, certainly it should be looked into and a remedy found. What I am trying to say here is that I have not gone into some very specific issues raised because they are going to come up in this very budget session, whether during the budget debate or in the debate on the President's Address. Therefore, I did not wish to take up time on that here now (*Interruptions*).

When we speak of unity, we have to see that we transcend our narrow party interests and reject any course intended to bring our system into contempt or bring about the slightest crack in the unity of the country or the slightest feeling of insecurity to any citizen of India. I am sure that with this all rightminded people will agree.

I know that sometimes people take up a cause which seems to them just. But we have found in every case that it is not possible to fully control these things. I am specially unhappy to hear from many places where there was trouble that a large number of children get involved. This is neither promoting the cause which they have at heart nor promoting the interests of these young people who are at an impressionable stage of their lives. We must all see how we can keep them out of such disturbances.

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We have never started anything like this**. When the country was not free, it was an entirely different situation. At that time, all citizens had to get together to free the country. I am glad that we did it. I am glad during the fighting on our borders, the entire country got together. But this is not the way to solve problems between one State and another or between Indians living in the same State.

It is this kind of violence and disturbance which must be deplored and condemned in the strongest possible terms. I have no hesitation in doing so. I should like to assure members from all parts of the country–in this we seek the co-operation of all the parties–that it is the Government's endeavour to enable all the Indian nationals–to live and work freely in any part of the country. We must work for an India which is one and which is not fragmented, as our great poet Tagore said, by narrow domestic walls, an India in which there are no high or low, no privileged or under-privileged, and no 'sons of the soil' other than free and equal citizens.

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* Replying to Shri Om Prakash Tyagi's question, "What about the corruption going on in the country?"

** Replying to Shri Giriraj Saran Singh's remark, "She herself started it."

We should take up these problems at this level. We have been discussing various problems. If in this session we can narrow them down to specific problems, I am sure it will be possible to deal with them in a way which would be satisfactory to all people and which would be helpful to the State Governments. I should like to express my deep sorrow at what happened in certain places...

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I have touched upon the basic causes. They are partly economic, partly political and partly social*.

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Unemployment comes within the economic problems**. That is why I say that we must sit together and try to work out some solutions... (*Interruptions*)

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I do not think that this is the right place to take up all these matters***. I have made an indirect reference to all these matters, though I have not mentioned them specifically. When a solution is found to a difficult problem, it cannot please everybody; it leaves a loophole over which some sections of the people are aroused and they are exploited by different parties... (*Interruptions.*) I am sorry we cannot have a dialogue here in this way... (*Interruptions.*)

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Any solution that is found leaves some cause for dissatisfaction for some sections of our people. We must get together and find the largest measure of agreement and arrive at a basis and all the political parties should help in this role. Then only can difficult problems be solved. Otherwise, no matter what report is accepted, the way is left open for some kind of disturbance and agitation. All problems cannot be solved merely by the Government; they can only be solved if all the parties agree to a common understanding since the country is facing such serious problems. We may have different views with regard to economic development and so on, but on other matters which affect us all we should get together.

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This is not the place to discuss the whole matter****. It had been discussed and some criteria was suggested. We have to see that everybody accepts the criteria. I request my hon. friends to withdraw their motion of no-confidence and decide to get together and try to find solutions to our great national problems.

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* Replying to Shri Hem Barua's question, "What have you done to remove the basic cause of this unrest."

** Responding to Shri Hem Barua's observation, "In Assam the number of unemployed is four lakhs."

*** A Member asked, "What about the implementation of Mahajan report ?"

**** Responding to Shri Bal Raj Madhok's observation, "When there are disputes among States, there should be some national criteria on the basis of which a settlement can be made. You do not lay down any criteria but work up the regional feelings."

Accountability of the Executive to Parliament*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is very difficult to know how to reply to this motion of no-confidence because, whereas certain items have been mentioned in the actual motion, many of the speeches have touched upon very much wider fields, bringing in, as usual, the public sector, socialism and all kinds of other matters which were not in the motion. Some of the speeches were in a very light-hearted vein and I should have liked to reply in like manner except that it is necessary to put straight certain facts so as to remove misunderstandings from the public mind.

As far as Congo is concerned, I have only one thing to say. I have been indeed amused as some hon. Members remarked from the other side, because once I did listen to Shri Asoka Mehta. The result was not one of my most conspicuously successful actions.

Since yesterday there has been a pitiful effort to put Humpty-Dumpty together again. Some people had seen visions of a grand alliance but evidently they could not win a vote of confidence even from their own people. So, Humpty-Dumpty had a fall and except for Shri Piloo Mody, who always sound well even when he talks utter nonsense, the others could not even work up any fervour or eloquence in their speeches in order to put together the pieces. Even though Shri Dange came to their rescue and gave them suggestions as to who should hold what portfolio, in their shadow Cabinet, their hopes for their shadow Cabinet have been completely shattered and I am afraid there is not even a shadow of a shadow Cabinet.

The motion broadly lists four grounds. The first is the charge that the elections in Kerala are being rigged. As we have been told by my colleague the Law Minister and others the electoral rolls were revised in January of this year. Bye-elections were held after that and no complaints were made that these elections were not fair. Mention has been made here about the Governor's visit to me.

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The Government is not here to interfere with the Election Commission or the Election Commissioner. And I should like to say that one of the things about which we can legitimately be proud in India since our independence is the fact that, except for occasional isolated cases, our elections have been free and fair and have given the people unfettered opportunity to express their wish. The very fact that almost every party has had the

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of No-Confidence in the Council of Ministers, *L.S. Deb*, 29 July, 1970, cc. 351-65.

opportunity of being elected to form a government, elected to power and also removed from power, is a proof if proof is needed, of the strength and justice of our electoral system.

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We have not only an independent Election Commission, but the law courts also exercise full vigilance to ensure the fairness of our elections. It is rather unfortunate that any kind of doubt is cast on the election system which has worked effectively all these years.

It is also difficult to believe that all of a sudden a State Government in a part of India which is known for its high political consciousness and literacy should meddle with the electoral system. However, as I said to Shri Gopalan when he came to see me about this, I have referred this matter to the Election Commissioner that such a complaint had been made and I was told that he had looked into the matter. There is, as you all know, still time for any objections to be raised in this matter. But I can assure the hon. House that we stand fully for free and fair elections. We are not concerned with what party comes into power. Naturally everybody would like their party to win but not at the cost of fair play or damage to the electoral system. We will never stand for. As you all know, as the Central Government we have given support and cooperation to all governments of whatever hue they were, which came into power anywhere in the country.

For the first time there was something new in this No-confidence Motion and that was the strange alliance which we witnessed. As was effectively pointed out by Shri Chandra Jeet Yadav, the cat was let out of the bag by the hon. Member, the Swatantra spokesman, when he delivered a broadside against socialism and nationalisation, which of course they always call State capitalism.

As usual, all kinds of other baseless charges and insinuations have been made. Reckless personal charges were made against some of my colleagues and against my Secretariat. I do not need to defend them because they are capable of taking care of themselves, but I can only feel sorry that some hon. Members simply cannot get away from this kind of vituperation and also from giving a casteist or a regional bias to anything that happens in the country.

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Although the question of the Kerala elections has been brought in as a bait to the Members of the CPI (M), it is obvious that the entire motion is designed as a personal attack on me on the supposed concentration of power in my hands. In fact, reference has been made to the recent reshuffle of the Cabinet and the transfer of some departments to the Cabinet Secretariat. I did not create the Cabinet Secretariat. It has long been in existence. I did not invent the Prime Minister's Secretariat either. Contrary to what some member has said, the Prime Minister's Secretariat in its present form was not designed by me but by my distinguished predecessor, Shri Lal Bahadurji Shastri. Since then we have answered questions in this House on the Secretariat, giving the numbers of officials. There has been no addition to the Secretariat nor is any addition contemplated because of any of the changes which have taken place because no extra work has come to that Secretariat.

The function of the Cabinet Secretariat is to provide effective coordination between the ministries of Government. It also takes up certain items of study, analysis and research. When the Planning Commission shed its executive function in response to the desire of this honourable House, the Cabinet Secretariat took on some of this work. It has to take initiative in several matters of economic coordination which were previously being attended to by the Planning Commission. The three Departments which have been transferred to the Cabinet Secretariat are the Personnel Department, the Electronics Department and the Scientific and Industrial Research Department. The Department of Personnel has been newly constituted and placed under the Cabinet Secretariat, as the House knows, on the recommendation of the A.R.C.

Regarding the intelligence agencies, I had thought that there were several experts in this House on public administration and at least they should have set the records straight. As is well-known, in England as well as in many other countries, Intelligence is directly with the Prime Minister and I am sure that these countries did not take inspiration from the Cabinet reshuffle in this country.

The C.B.I. and the Special Police Establishment have been mainly concerned with the eradication of corruption from public service. It has necessarily to be a part of the Personnel Department. Even in the Home Ministry, the work was being looked after on the Services side under a separate Secretary (Services).

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence was transferred from the Ministry of Finance to the Cabinet Secretariat in order to ensure better coordination with the Central Bureau of Investigation. The C.B.I. has already a wing dealing with economic offences and the work of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence is very largely related to such offences.

Some members made a remark about the committee of Appointments saying that previously there was the Home Minister, the Prime Minister and the Minister concerned but now, since the Home and the Prime Minister was the same person, there would only be two persons. So, I should like to inform the House that the Committees of the Cabinet were formed soon after the reshuffle, but unfortunately, they were not declared immediately—that I had decided that Shri Chavanji should remain on that Committee, since he was dealing with this question and with the people who would be concerned will be in these Committees. Apart from that, I would like to point out that none of these Committees works on the basis of voting. The persons sit together and it is always a question of having discussion and coming to a decision.

So far as the transfer of the C.S.I.R. to the Cabinet Secretariat is concerned, the hon. Members will remember that the Prime Minister, from the very beginning of its existence has been the *ex-officio* President. Therefore, this does not really change the situation.

As for the future development of electronics in India, this also has been a subject of long and anxious debate in both Houses ever since the publication of the Bhabha Report on Electronics. The future development of electronics, has such wide ranging application not only in defence but also with regard to communications, radio television, etc., hence the fast development of the industry has become a matter of crucial importance to the

country. Several Ministries and Departments of the Governments as well as the private sector are consumers of the product of the electronics industry. It was in order to give a special impetus to the development of electronics that the Government have been considering the setting up of a special organisational structure. The allocation of the electronics Department to the Cabinet Secretariat was made to enable this structure to be built which, we hope, will be very soon.

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It may seem amusing to you*. But for most such organisations that have to be set up, with which many Ministries are concerned, it is more convenient for coordinated working if at this stage the Prime Minister is there. Similarly a great deal was said about ministerial responsibility being diluted and collective responsibility being discounted. Nothing could be farther from the fact. Many hon. Members do not seem to have a correct appreciation of what is meant by collective responsibility. All Cabinet decisions are collectively taken. (*Interruptions*). Some decisions are taken by individual Ministers but we are all collectively responsible and these decisions are collectively supported and defended by the entire Government. In modern Government, several spot decisions must also be taken and Ministers who take them do so in the full knowledge that they will have to defend them on the floor of the House and in the full trust that they will have the full support of their colleagues. All controversial matters are brought to the Cabinet itself or to one of its Committees. I do not have to point out that throughout last year my colleagues have come to this House and given the reasons for their decisions. They have won an open vote of the House. They have withstood many determined efforts to shake them and challenge them. Hon. Members from the Opposition had wrongly imagined that we on this side would not stand together. They have spent days and nights planning strategies and offering prayers to divide us. (*Interruptions*)

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They have set afloat all kinds of rumours of dissension but we have stood together with loyalty to one another and faith in our Party and full conviction in our policies. I may tell the hon. Member opposite that what they could too achieve during this difficult year, they will certainly not be able to achieve in the coming months.

Sir, I have respect for my colleagues, respect for their ability and respect for their dedication to the welfare of the people and to the progress of this great nation. (*Interruptions*). That is why we have been able to work together and to introduce certain far-reaching changes in our national life. I do agree with the hon. Member, Shri Dwivedy, that much that we wanted to do we have not been able to do. We have not been able to proceed as fast as we would like to do. We have not said that we have done everything. But when you go ahead in a democratic way, it is a slower path than the other. I am not saying this to excuse ourselves because I fully realise that we must work more speedily and reach our goals more effectively.

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* Responding to a Member's remark "It is all amusing".

Cabinet Government and Parliamentary Democracy are built on the principle that the overriding power and responsibility rests in the Legislature. Parliament is the master of Ministers and if you could put it that way, Ministers in turn are—I do not like the word 'master'—in a way over civil servants. Those who are propagating the myth of a powerful bureaucracy are in fact running down this Parliament and the work which it has been doing to guard the people's interests. Now you can give the civil service any name you like, but the fact remains that whether you have a capitalist government or a socialist government or any other form of government, it has to have some kind of a civil service.

If it is a large country, obviously that civil service will be large. And a country in which society itself takes upon itself the power and the duty to regulate economic and social life has to have the appropriate machinery to do it. But the hon. Member is right when he said that in a socialist State there will be more servants of the State, but they are servants of the people, not masters of the people.

There may be, and there is, some inefficiency and there may also be some deadwood in the Administrative organisation. But we cannot deny that there are also fine people who are as good as any in the world. They are doing their work with ability and dedication. It would be a pity if the House were to do anything which would blunt these tools. This is not peculiar to our country, because, almost everywhere there is sometimes criticism against bureaucrats and even in countries and Governments which have far more advanced method than we can afford today.

A statement of mine or rather a speech was quoted and in the attempt to show that there was some contradiction between that and a letter which I had written about our administrative service to a newly selected IAS officer. I don't think that there is any contradiction between the two. Because, I do believe that we must give better status to Specialists. All over the world it has been realised that technical jobs must go to technician. But everywhere administrators and business managers also are being given more intensive training in new and modern methods. We have been choosing specialists for our technical posts so far as possible, but at no time has this meant that we should dispense with the administrative service. On the contrary, the administrative service must be given greater social orientation so as to be able to discharge its responsibilities effectively.

Something has been said about the communal problem. But this problem has been thoroughly debated on earlier occasions and I leave it to the country to judge whose speeches have been provocative or have added to the tension in any particular area.

The problem of the refugees is naturally one which is uppermost in the minds of most of us. They are facing very genuine hardships and this is a matter of grave concern and deep distress. The Government has indeed a heavy responsibility to settle and rehabilitate them with great speed. We are doing everything possible towards this end. Shri Samar Guha's excitement was understandable. I entirely agree with what he said this morning about the political side of the problem. He mentioned also my visit to Calcutta. But, as I told him when I met him there that particular visit was for a limited purpose, that is to look into the implementation of the various decisions which had been taken earlier in Delhi.

And, the steps being taken for the refugees and their rehabilitation formed a considerable part of this discussion, whether it was with political parties, whether it was with administrators or some of the other publicmen and women whom I met, I have promised our friends from Bengal to visit the transit camps soon. I am sorry I could not go there on that occasion.

This is hardly the occasion on which to speak about Manipur. But, since the matter was brought up, I would just like to say that this House is fully aware of the law and order situation there. It is obvious, whether it is Manipur or elsewhere, that the restoration of normal conditions is an essential precondition for any fair election. Yet we all know that this part of the country faces many difficult problems. We are looking into them.

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Shri Surendranath Dwivedy also spoke heatedly about land reforms. I do not think that it is correct to say that our programmes are not making any headway even in the States where we are in control. I think there has never been greater consciousness at the Centre an in the States of the great importance of creating an equitable agrarian structure within the shortest possible time.

In Bengal, we announced some months ago that the occupiers of land belonging to eligible categories would not be evicted and that their position would be regularised very soon. Earlier this month, the West Bengal Land Reforms Amendment Act was enacted. Its result will be to increase the burgadar's share of the produce from 60 to 75 per cent, in cases where they themselves provide all the inputs. The conditions under which land owners are permitted to resume lands have been made more favourable to burgadars, and the right of cultivation by them has been made hereditary. It has also been decided to enact fresh legislation on ceiling, fixing the ceiling in terms of family rather than individual units. The details are now being finalised. The Government of West Bengal have been told to give this work the highest priority, that is, the re-distribution of waste and surplus land to eligible cultivator. In this matter, the State Government are reviewing the ceiling law and enforcing the existing ceilings with much greater rigour. (*Interruptions*). Detailed instructions have already gone out to district collectors, and notices have been served on several thousands of the largest owners of surplus land. The amendments to the Bihar Tenancy Act, carried out during President's rule, are being implemented, so that even bataidars on oral lease are not liable to eviction.

In UP, the ceiling laws are being reviewed. In Maharashtra, the rent payable by tenants to land-owners has been reduced to one-sixth of the produce, which is perhaps the lowest in the country. After many years, there is now real hope that land reforms, which have so long been talked about, are at last under way.

The examples of Bihar and West Bengal during President's rule conclusively show that the Central Government is earnestly engaged in carrying through the measures which it has been urging on other State Governments.

The other problem which is very much on everybody's mind is naturally that of unemployment. I fully share the concern expressed in this House and outside about this

growing problem. But the only lasting remedy for unemployment and under-employment, particularly of skilled personnel such as engineers and technicians, lies in vigorous implementation of the plan and inclusion of specially labour-intensive programmes.

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The plan outlay for the current year has been stepped up by about Rs. 400 crore especially with a view to bring some improvement in the employment situation. We are examining how to speedily organise a land army, that is, enrolling cadres of skilled and unskilled workers to be put to work on specific projects of public utility.

There was reference to the performance of nationalised banks. It may be that we did proceed a bit slowly for many reasons. But there is no basis for the criticism that benefits have not accrued to the small persons or the small farmers, although I concede that much remains to be done and must be done speedily.

The number of borrowal accounts in the case of direct loans to agriculture went up from Rs. 1,34,849 at the end of June, 1969 to Rs. 2,97,670 by the end of March, 1970. The number of accounts for advances to retail traders and small business increased from 28,037 at the end of June, 1969 to 70, 607 by the end of March, 1970. Similarly, the number of loans to self-employed persons increased impressively from 422 at the end of June, 1969 to 22,030 by the end of March, 1970. The share of advances to neglected sectors, namely, agriculture, small scale industries, road transport operators, retail traders, small business etc. in the aggregate advances of the public sector banks increased from 14.6 per cent at the end of June, 1969 to 20.3 per cent by the end of March, 1970.

There were some entirely false charges made regarding issuing of licences. Perhaps the House knows that the decision in all important cases is taken not by any individual Minister or by the Prime Minister but by the Cabinet as a whole. A ridiculous statement was made alleging that I had taken over licensing in my own hands. Nothing could be farther from the truth. All that has been decided is that the grant of licences in certain defined cases should be considered by the Committee on Economic Co-ordination on which all Ministers dealing with economic matters are represented. This is largely because this is a controversial matter, and many cases come within the purview of different Ministries also. Therefore, the question is not of concentration of power but of sharing responsibility and decision making power and bringing the collective judgment of a ministerial group to bear on these important problems of licensing.

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It has been alleged that the decisions taken on the grant of industrial licences have been inspired by dishonest motives. I have no hesitation in saying that this is a mischievous and reckless charge, and also an entirely dishonest charge. I have no hesitation in maintaining that the interest of the national economy and not narrow or party or personal interest guides our decisions.

I have been compared, not for the first time, to Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini. If they had perhaps read more books, they could have used more names. I think the people will laugh at the preposterousness of these comparisons.

It was somewhat dramatically stated that this country would not tolerate Hitler. I entirely agree with this. In fact, this is what I myself have been saying. I have said it in the House; I have said it outside also. This country will not tolerate Hitler and what Hitlerism stands for. But we should know what it stands for, namely, the preaching of hatred against sections of the people, the building up of para-military organisations, the use of the lie, the big lie and the biggest lie and the readiness to use any and every method capture power. We do not believe in such methods ; we leave such methods to others.

The biggest lie that has been told in this House on this occasion is the one that is now being constantly repeated about our subservience, as they say, to the Soviet Union. This, as the House and those Members who have been in the House for some time, will remember, is not a new charge. It was also made against my father. Some called him a Soviet stooge and others called him an American camp-follower, but he was an Indian, a proud Indian. Now, the same charge is being levelled against me. My concern is only for the people of India. These charges are not going to deflect us from seeking friendship with all nations because the country's good requires it. And when the national interests demand it, we shall not hesitate to stand up against all nations. Somebody said : let us have one example. There is a very recent example, which is our not signing the NPT.

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I trust the country will treat this charge with the contempt which it deserves. India, free, sovereign, democratic India, shall never be a satellite of any country, however great or powerful.

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Those who bandy about this charge show a singular lack of confidence in themselves or in the country. All the chanceries of the world know and respect the fact that our country has steadfastly pursued its own course of action.

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And I shall continue to do it so long as I have anything to do with the Government of this country. The consistent and steadfast adherence of our policy of non-alignment is absolutely non-negotiable. Many people thought that we should succumb, they have tried to browbeat us here many a time, but we have not gone back from anything for which we stand, nor shall we ever do so in foreign policy or in domestic policy.

I hope that this House will reject....this motion and will continue to show its confidence in this Government.

Democracy in India*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think the House knows that in all my fifty-six years, I have never shirked a battle nor a debate nor a difficult situation. And, therefore, normally, I have welcomed No-confidence Motions because they have allowed us to put forward our point of view. They have also shown us that in all these years the Opposition has not been able to come up with a single new point.

All of us remember just a few months ago when we used to have a No-confidence Motion at the beginning of every single session of Parliament. When was that ? When they were expecting an election to come. And now, again, because there is an election in the offing, the habit is starting all over again. Well, it does not matter. While I am talking of elections, I might as well answer a point raised by Shri Shyamnandan Mishra, and perhaps Shri Samar Guha about our so-called promise that there would not be an election. Now, Sir, we did have a meeting of the Opposition leaders when we were in the midst of a war. We did say that while a war is on, it would not be proper to have an election. But once the war was over, what excuse did we have not to have an election?...

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I repeat what excuse could we offer to the country for avoiding an election in peace time? (*Interruptions*). There was no question of understanding. We had said that because there was a war, it would not be proper to have an election.

Now, just by shaking your head you cannot change facts.

Sir, it was said that there were deficiencies in the speeches on this side. I personally do not know by what standards these matters are weighed. I also have listened very carefully and in this debate, I have not missed a single speech. Even though I was not present in this room while the hon. Member, Shri Vajpayee was speaking, I heard him from my room. But, I can affirm very strongly that the speeches from our side answered every criticism and every point that was raised from the Opposition side.

I should like to congratulate the Finance Minister who has had to deal with identical points, twice over within a few days, which can be a frightful bore, and specially the Defence Minister for his brilliant speech which was full of humour yet had depth.

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* Participating in the debate on the Motion of No-Confidence in the Council of Ministers, *L.S. Deb.*, 22 November, 1973, cc. 373-93.

Much has been spoken about democracy. My colleague, Shrimati Maya Ray has dealt with the vision of the democracy that West Bengal experienced just a short while ago. Hence I do not think that we need to take very seriously the remarks made by certain Members on the other side. Regarding this matter we know also–perhaps the hon. Members might contradict me–but I would request all of you to read the records of the House–that some speeches may have been made in this House, but certainly, they were made to me in my room by Members of some opposition parties. Some people who were, at that time, in our party also blamed us time and again for being far too soft with the then West Bengal Government; urging that it should be dismissed because of its undemocratic character; that some strong action should be taken. It was I who insisted that while the Government was there, unless it fell on its own, we were not going to take any such step.

Now, the entire Opposition is together in raising the cry of protecting democracy. Our party is the one that has brought democracy to India; which has laid the solid foundations of democracy, and to-day also is determined and pledged to strengthen democracy and to widen it and deepen its roots in our country.

But democracy is not the licence to abuse, to make false allegations, to weaken the confidence of the country or to denigrate its achievements. This House knows the meaning of democracy. It has had an unsurpassed reputation of being a custodian of democracy in a world where in many countries, one after another, the democratic method is being given up.

In India not only in this House but on outside platforms and other forums, parties and individuals have complete freedom of expression. Government has done nothing at all to abridge this freedom Nor does it have any intention of doing so in the future. I have made this commitment at every single public meeting. And I shall continue to make it. Not only to make it in words but I shall continue to act accordingly, because this is an article of faith with us. We do not just talk about it; we have lived upto it and we have worked for it. That is the reason why there is democracy in this country today.

But, democracy does impose certain responsibilities. There is certainly responsibility on the majority party to ensure that the voice of the minority is not suppressed. But, at the same time, there is also a responsibility on the minority, which is the Opposition. Does it accept the verdict of the majority of our people or does it not? I submit, Sir, with all humility, that from the day that we have been elected to this House, we have heard voices from the opposite side claiming that they are the ones who represent the people; they are the ones who were elected to this House by the people; perhaps we on this side have somehow got in through a backdoor ! According to them, it seems that we have not been elected at all. Please read the records to refresh your memory about what has been said.

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Democracy imposes responsibilities at all times on the Opposition, but more, specially, in times of crisis, not to create further difficulties or to block programmes which have been accepted and passed by Parliament. These programmes are not the whims of the Prime Minister or her colleagues; these are programmes which have been brought to Parliament

and accepted by Parliament. There should not be opposition for the sake of opposition. I am not going to dwell on the question of how responsible or irresponsible have been the actions or certain Opposition Parties during this period of acute economic crisis. This is something which the public is well aware of.

'Fascist' is another word that is bandied about. I have explained on previous occasions that I have had some experience of fascism. I have visited Fascist countries during this sort of rule and, I think, we have some knowledge now of what is happening in certain countries. I do not think anybody in the world will contradict that our party has had the most consistent record of fighting against fascism, more than perhaps any other country.

An hon. Member* has dwelt on the question of security. I am one of those who do not believe in this sort of security arrangements. Hardly a day passes without my trying to fight them. Yet in spite of my security arrangements, can you name today any single leader of Government who is so often so close to so many people for so many days in the year, year after year, security or no security ? How close are the people with me when I tour the various parts of the country ! We have been close in our relations with the people. We take them into confidence and that is why they have given us their confidence.

We may not always be able to protect them from all hardships, due to events beyond our control or perhaps due to our own failings, our own shortcomings. We have not cut ourselves off from the people, we have gone to them, at least I can say for myself that I have gone to them and I have admitted the mistake, when we have committed one. We know we have committed mistakes. But we know also that nobody in the world can run a country of this size without committing mistakes. Even experts from other countries have had occasion to exclaim that they have never "seen a problem of this size"! For instance, we have had an expert to advise us on the Brahmaputra. He turned to me to say that he had dealt with river problems but that "this was a sea, not an ordinary river. We are trying to chart uncharted seas. Similar problems have been faced by some countries but never on such a gigantic scale, never in a democratic system, never with these different levels of development where we have a wide range of people from the tribal areas who so far had little opportunity for development, who were cut off from education and from every other kind of amenity even from administration, to various other sophisticated sections. Never at the level of poverty in which our foreign rulers had left us.

We do make mistakes, and perhaps so long as we are human, we shall continue to make mistakes. All we can promise the people is that when we have made a mistake, we should try to rectify it. We do not wish to cover it up. Some people do try to cover up. I am not saying that they do not. But it is our effort that shortcomings should be revealed and we should attempt to find a new way, if necessary.

My friend, Shri Shyamnandan Mishra, seemed to be allergic to the words 'character assassination'. But how else do we describe the remarks that are made from the other side ? If there is another appellation for it, we can certainly use it, but the meaning would be the same. You may give this name or another, but it means the same thing.

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* Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu.

What we have said is that if there is a *prima facie* case against any person, there must be an inquiry. But there cannot be an inquiry on every irresponsible allegation that is made. Shri H.N. Mukerjee insisted that because allegations were made, replies should be given. With all due respect to him, I would say, as Babu Jagjivan Ramji has said, that all these questions have been asked not once but week after week, session after session, and every time a reply has been given by the Minister in charge. Sometimes when I have been there, I have also spoken. Even in the course of this debate, when allegations were made, they were promptly refuted.

There is a concerted move to try and spread this atmosphere of–I can only call it–dirt. Maybe it is in the hope that some of it will stick. And some of it may stick, but if there is no truth in it, what can we do ? There is nothing that we can do about it.

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And how much time and energy is spent in this witch-hunting. No matter how many times a lie is repeated, it does not become truth, nor do facts change just because the Opposition would like them to be otherwise.

On the opposite side there is a measure of paucity of ideas, of work, of programmes. Perhaps that is why, as somebody remarked just now, the Opposition is reduced to the dire strait of concentrating their fire on this aspect of our public life.

I do not want to talk about Maruti, because all the questions that have been asked have been replied to, time and again. What I have said and my Ministers have said–I have said it in public meetings–is that no favour has been shown, no rules have been violated, no injustice has been done to anyone. Whatever salary or consulting service is there, is according to the rules. Those rules may be wrong. Then let us decide that we change the rules. But while those rules exist, you cannot say that different rules should be applied to different people.

Babu Jagjivan Ram has already dealt with the land question. For months, although the Opposition has gone all out to discover something wrong, they have not been able to do so. Nothing irregular has been done. I can assure you that I shall not countenance any violation of the law or of rules or of procedure.

To give another example of the manner in which such malicious and false talk or writing is indulged in, the party to which one hon. Member opposite belongs started, at the very time that I gave away the only house I have ever owned, a canard of my owning a house in every State, may be in every country in the world! When an hon. Member who questioned me about it in the corridor, wrote to them, they replied: "She has only said it is mischievous and malicious; she had not said that it is not true!" When a specific question had been asked of me in Parliament, "Did I own a house anywhere ?" and I had said 'No', obviously that includes a villa in Rome or anywhere. As everybody very well knows, I do not have a foreign account either.

It was also sought to establish that I had land, vast stretches of land, in every State. Such questions are also asked—'Have you not got land in such and such State ?' Such wrong accusations go on and on and on.

Another story that is being spread nothing to do with land or anything–is that I am passing away with cancer. I received this news from a number of Chief Ministers, that the workers of a political party have been spreading such rumours in the villages.

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Some people now speak of the INA who at the crucial moment were on the wrong side of the fence. (*Interruptions*).

There are parties who have not started denigrating the Government only today. They have tried to denigrate the national image, they have spoken against Gandhiji, they have spoken against Jawaharlal Nehru, they have spoken against all our policies, all our programmes from the very beginning. So, for them this is nothing new. For them, everything has been wrong. In fact, a large number of them, those who were old enough, denounced us for pursuing wrong path even before independence and for the manner in which we own independence. Even in this House very recently an insinuation was made that it was not the people's movement which won freedom. I hope that all of you noted that remark. I hope that you will go and inform the people.

We have talked of law and order. An hon. Member–I think it was either Dr. Karni Singh or perhaps Shri H.M. Patel–spoke about leaving the students alone.

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I am in entire agreement with him that students should not be exploited for any purpose, political or otherwise. What is happening today ? I got a message just a little while ago regarding the IIT, Delhi. A political party is holding meetings within the compound of the institution–and this was one of the very good technical institutions–inciting the workers to beat up the heads of departments. Is this the way that we are going to deal with law and order ? Is this the way that we are going to encourage education in our country ? The same situation exists elsewhere also. I do not want to name the institution. In another city the IIT was the very best in India until a particular party established a unit there. Today it is in constant trouble and hardly any worthwhile work is being done there. One could duplicate these instances any number of times. This would be bad enough at any time, but what is worse is that this is the party that talks in the name of Indian culture. This is the party that talks in the name of the Hindu religion.

It is the same regarding their talk of democracy. Hon. Members have heard of the attack on a newspaper. I do not know what the newspaper wrote. I did not even know that such a newspaper existed in Shahdara till this news came, but there was an attack on it. Shri Vajpayee mentioned that he was very deeply concerned but obviously not about the attack. (*Interruptions*).

Talking of amenities for the people, just 10 minutes ago, I received a report of a lightning strike from this morning by a Jan Sangh controlled union at the Wazirabad Head Works. Most areas of Delhi are without water. (*Interruptions*). Everybody knows the capacity for mischief. Just two people can make mischief anywhere. May I know what control could one have over them ? To set fire to a house, to set fire to a bus, to destroy something, you do not need a large number of people there nor a union. It is constructive work which is difficult.

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We have never supported either the Communist Party, or any other party. We here are supporting Congress programmes. We welcome support from anybody who gives support to our policies, but we have never moved a millimetre, or whatever is less than a millimetre, from our declared programmes. Most Congress programmes are not new programmes. We may couch them in new works but these programmes were accepted by the Congress Party a long time ago, even before the split. Therefore, there is no question of any flux or indecision on our part. It is true that we cannot always go ahead as fast as we should like to do, but our direction is clear for all to see, whether it is in regard to our industrial policy or another policy. Sometimes a little adjustment has to be made. For instance, we thought we would not give licences to the Big Houses. But when we found that the development of some of the backward areas was stagnating, we decided to give licences for those areas. But I may tell this House that this has not helped much. Even the Big Houses are reluctant to go to places where the best facilities are not available. Of course, this does not apply to all Big Concerns. You have all heard an hon. Member speak of his experience regarding a factory which was to have come up in his constituency about four years ago.

...A question has been posed whether there should be legislation or the Gandhian way of persuasion. I can assure this House that I am all for persuasion. But has persuasion worked in a single case ? Only the other day there was a meeting on the whole concept of trusteeship. How many of the businessmen who attended it are willing to adopt what Gandhiji meant by trusteeship ? On the contrary, they consider it to be an extreme view, going to a limit which businessmen found impossible to follow.

Mention was made of my Mathura speech. Babuji has already replied to the DMK. He has taken the words out of my mouth for that was what I was going to say to my friends of the DMK. What I stated in that speech was for that particular occasion. One or two political parties were shouting slogans. My remarks did not apply to a party which was hundreds of miles away from Mathura. I have not accused the DMK of demanding Separation. What I did say clearly was that the DMK were very close to a person who is advocating it, yet I had not heard any Member of the DMK announce that "we are with this person, but we differ with him on this specific point". That is the small point I had made.

We have the support of the Communist Party on some matters, but we differ from them on a number of other matters and do not hesitate to clarify the position. The hon. leader of

the DMK also drew a picturesque metaphor about the Ship of State not progressing fast enough.

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Somebody made the comparison. You quoted it.* I thought that you approved of the phrase when you quoted it. As we all know, quotations are used with a motive, sometimes leaving out those portions which do not support one's argument. I do not know whether you did so in this case.

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Now the only question is, if a ship is not going fast enough, do we speed it up or do we sink it ? This is the question before the country. It is obvious that there is an attempt by some people–I am not saying, by you** or any particular party–to sink the ship, in the hope that another ship will crop up from the bottom of the sea or may fall from the heavens.

We were also reminded, as we are in most such debates, that the Congress is a motley crowd. So it is. We are rather proud of our diversity. Within this diversity, there is a great deal of unity. We know that sometimes some people indulge in groupism or talk against one another. But once a policy is decided, we go ahead. However, we have to deal not only with statistics but with human beings. Human beings in our party are the same as outside–after all, we are not a different race. I think, you will at least concede us that. Some of our Members may want to retard a particular programme that they do not approve of; they may want to modify it in some way. But I do not think that anybody can doubt our intentions, our dedication to our programmes and our determination to put them through.

Most of our States have implemented them. I concede that sometimes when we pursue them, their implementation leaves much to be desired in single sphere. This is unfortunate. I am deeply concerned about it. We must do all we can to see that implementation is improved all along the line. But to compare the internal differences of our party with the type of differences which exist on your side is in my view absolutely ridiculous.

I now come to my good friend, Shri Shyamnandan Babu's remarks—you are also my friend even though you may be somebody else's. When I spoke about the necessity of a financial wizard, perhaps the hon. Member thought I had him in mind. Actually, as I have explained on another occasion, I was not speaking about India at all. I was trying to analyse the world situation and saying that there was hardly a country in the world today which had managed to escape from some kind of financial crisis. What can this be due to ? Something must be wrong in the system. Something is wrong in our system here. I am not denying it. I would be the first person to admit the need for very radical changes. But to some extent we are tied to world currencies and trends. This is not an excuse nor am I saying that this is the whole of our trouble here. I am not, in any way, trying to shirk our responsibility. Our responsibility is considerable. When one makes an assessment of a situation, one has to mention all the relevant factors which are contributing to it.

* Replying to Shri Sezhiyan who said : "I did not make it; it was a quotation from Patriot".

** Shri Sezhiyan.

One of the factors is that in almost every country–Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu or somebody else may claim that this does not exist in socialist countries. Probably, it is because they have an entirely different system and we do not have that system. We know that in those countries also, they went through hell before they emerged; they went through starvation before they emerged; they went through every kind of difficulty, every kind of repression, before they came upto the stage where they are now.

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So, even though the reasons may be quite different, the effects may be quite different, there is no doubt that what is happening in the world is having its effect in India. No matter how much we try, it will continue to have an impact on us.

When I spoke about things getting better, I did not say that the entire situation was changing. But I did say that the food situation was slightly better than various other items. For instance, there is no doubt–I do not want to go into details of public sector functioning–that some of our public sector undertakings which were not functioning well have improved considerably. There are also many other aspects which could be called the silver lining in our difficult situation.

One point to which I forgot to refer earlier concerns the complaint that I had not appreciated the help of the Opposition during the Bangladesh crisis. I do not think this is true. Even in my public meetings I did mention that, in this matter, the Opposition parties and all the people of India had stood as solid as a rock and that was how we achieved our wonderful victory and we could withstand the great challenge.

Hon. Member Shri H.M. Patel spoke about offshore drilling. His reference I think, was to the Tenneco offer. So far as I remember, the proposal was not accepted because it meant that half the oil which was produced would go to the collaborating company. This was what weighed with us at that time. There was no question of any ideology standing in the way. In the Bombay High exploration, the collaboration for a survey is with a French firm, the platform 'Sagar Samrat' was made by Mitsubishi of Japan, and the drilling contract has been taken up by an American company, M/s. Offshore International. But it is true that, in items like oil, which can vitally affect not only the economy but which in other countries has interfered with politics, economics and so on, one has to be very careful and I do not think that one can entirely ignore ideology in such a case. As a matter of fact, even in the present situation, this is very relevant.

Criticism has been voiced about the President's Rule in different States. So far as Uttar Pradesh was concerned, this came about with reference to a very specific situation. As was explained in this House, the ruling party had a big majority. There was no doubt whatsoever about the majority. However, the situation created by police indiscipline was not an ordinary one. And we could not at that moment guess what its ramifications would be, not only in U.P. but perhaps in other parts of the country also and therefore, we thought it wiser to play safe. We have to compliment the State leadership. They could have said, 'No; we are going to stick on to the Government'–but they viewed the entire situation in the national perspective. And that is why the then Chief Minister advised the temporary

imposition of Central rule. It is now being alleged that the installation of the popular Government is with a view to utilise official machinery for election purposes. We knew that election was coming. So what was the need of removing the Ministry, if it was only a question of using it ? The Ministry could very well have remained until the elections. Obviously, this criticism is politically motivated.

So far as Andhra is concerned, the situation in which the President's rule had to be imposed was entirely different. There was a breakdown of law and order in which all parties–and I am very sorry to say that our party was also one of them–had a hand in creating this situation. The administration had come to a complete standstill. The period of President's Rule has been utilised to try and find a consensus in respect of the overall political and economic problems of the State, and I am sure that there will soon be a popular Government even though no elections are in sight.

A reference has been made to the High Court judgment in Orissa. I do not wish to refer to the judgment, but I should like to say that the Governor was justified in entertaining a doubt about the reliability of the majority of the Opposition because of the manner in which the fall of the government had been about. And this doubt was further strengthened by the statements of prominent leaders of the Opposition themselves when they insisted upon an early formation of the government because they felt that otherwise some of their followers might defect.

The third point is that the budget has not been passed and in view of the above doubt, it had to be assured that it should be passed in accordance with the constitutional provisions which might not have been possible through an unstable government. Hon. Members opposite have understandably overlooked the case of Manipur where in a similar situation, where our Party could have formed the Government, we did not allow them to do so.

I do not want to take more time of the House. But I should like to make just one point. No one has said and certainly I have never done so, that all our troubles are due to Bangladesh or the war. But can any one in this House or anywhere in the world deny that, that was a major crisis whose seriousness cannot be gauged by the amount spent ? It was a major crisis which dislocated every part of the administration and imposed a very heavy burden on us. A burden of this dimension cannot simply be shaken off in a year or so. Hon. Members will remember that I said so in this House even before the burden fell on us. I said that the people wanted certain actions to be taken. We were conscious of our duty and would certainly help the people of Bangladesh but that we would have to pay the price for it later on. This is not the whole of the story, so far as our present problems are concerned but it is an important part of the story and when you are assessing the situation, you cannot leave out any part of the assessment merely because it is inconvenient or took place some time ago.

As I said earlier, there have been failings in our functioning and nobody will deny that the economic situation is a serious one. I do believe that it is not as serious as it was sometime ago because of the improving food situation. On the other hand we have other more serious problems, such as petroleum, we could not possibly have foreseen or the manner in which the Middle East situation erupted. These events are beyond our control.

We have other serious and urgent problems. I do not want to go into economic questions since Shri Chavan has dealt with them not merely now but as late as last week in reply to the Adjournment Motion and when the same points were raised in Question Hour.

Sir, I am the daughter of a historian. I have had the privilege of seeing history being made and I have also had some small hand in the making of history myself as part of our remarkable national movement. I do not live for one or two elections. In every single speech, whether to my party or to the public, I have made it clear that elections come and go, but our duty is not merely to win–any political party wants to win elections–but that should not be our goal and that should not be the focus of our attention.....(*Interruptions*). We do not work for the present. We are looking ahead to the future. India has had a long history but it has a still longer way to go.

We have dreamt dreams for India. We have seen visions of the future that we wanted for our people and it is for them we work and struggle. We are not going to be diverted by men of little faith and no vision, people who talk of India's civilisation but visualise it only in terms of narrowness and communalism. We have not been diverted and we are not going to be diverted from our path and our duty.

Those who swear by the caste system lecture to us about the conditions of the Harijans. Our own concern is for the Harijans and I must express my agony and deep distress at the fact that, in spite of all our laws, we have not been able to change the attitudes of our people.

An atrocity here or an atrocity there is deplorable. It is to be condemned. But, by itself it can be dealt with. The real problem is the attitude of thinking and this has not changed.

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Well, whether it is Government or whether it is political parties, that particular question has nothing to do with Harijans.* That is a question of land, which I believe is being sorted out. The land problem has not arisen because the people are Harijans. But there are parties, there are groups who believe ardently in the caste system and that is what is perpetuating the divisions in our society and preventing integration.

Hon. Members opposite are fond of urging the people to reject me. Now, if this happens, it will not be the first time in history, our own history or of the world, that some one has been falsely charged and falsely implicated or that people have been made to believe such falsehood. But I have not the shadow of a doubt that whatever may be said now, whatever may be done, history will vindicate me, history will vindicate our party.

Hon. Members have loudly called for elections. If we take our minds back to the last time–I am talking of the time before the last Parliamentary elections–the same demand was voiced. Yet when we opted for election, the very same people accused us of being undemocratic. This is the first time in the world, I think, that anybody has equated the

* Replying to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's question : "What about the attitude of the Haryana Government ?"

holding of elections with negation of democracy. We took the Opposition at their word. They resented this deeply but all of us are here, including hon. Members opposite, because of those elections and the people's verdict.

Now, Sir, I have finished. I should like to draw attention to the one more rather sarcastic comment of an hon. Member about unilateral love for the people.

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If the hon. Member believes in democracy, he should accept the people's right to decide whom they should love.* It is for the people to judge everybody's weaknesses and faults, to weigh them, and decide, what, in the ultimate analysis, they believe to be in their interests; who, no matter what their shortcomings and faults may be, can maintain the stability and the unity of the country and go ahead towards the declared goal. If it is a question of one-sided love, as for as the people are concerned, we shall always give them our love, whether they are with us or not. We shall give them our love, we shall give them our service, and I am sure that the people will also stand by us.

So, I appeal to the hon. Members to reject this No-confidence move which is obviously entirely politically motivated and, although they have resented Prof. Mukerjee's statement, I must say that the timing does seem highly suspicious.

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* Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remarks, "People have unilateral love for you. You are giving them unemployment. You are giving them high prices. So, people have unilateral love for you".

Struggle of Railway Employees*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have listened, I do not know for how many hours, whether 10 hours are over or not... But the time you have finished, it will be well over 10 hours.

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We have heard, more or less, the same arguments which had been made day before yesterday, the day before that and, perhaps even the day before that—I do not know; I have not been in the House during several of those occasions. I really did not understand the purpose of this no-confidence motion except perhaps that there was a need for the Opposition to show that they are united. Rather than blaming us for creating this unity, if they want to say anything about it, they should have applauded it. It is a laudable thing if they are united. If they had been united for a positive purpose, I would be the first to welcome it. I do not know what positive results they expected from the no-confidence motion.

To say that our policy is anti-labour is the most preposterous statement that anybody could make. I would like to know–all these people have formed the Government at one time or the other—which of them have done anything more for labour than we have done during our time. The last speaker spoke just now about the way in which they had fought for the rights of the landless, about land-grabbing and all that, but when they formed the Government, how many of them passed any laws about land ceilings? We have passed them. In the last year we have not done anything to stop strikes. There have been far more strikes. There have been far more strikes than ever before.

We have always negotiated; we have always spoken and, in many cases, we have conceded what was asked for.

Did that create an atmosphere of cooperation? Did that create an atmosphere of greater production? Did that create an atmosphere of the Opposition leaders saying, "You have made concessions; you have done something good and, on this, at least we can applaud you"? On the contrary, the concessions we have made have led to further demands almost immediately.

Today, we are not considering merely what is to be given to Railwaymen. We are considering whether we can go along this road of giving more and more at a time when

* Replying to the debate on the Motion of No-Confidence in the Council of Ministers, *L.S. Deb.*, 9 May, 1974, cc. 520-38.

we have less and less. This is the question. It is not a question of only the Railways. If we have made a mistake previously, that is no reason to continue to make such mistakes. We have always acknowledged our mistakes. We have tried to correct them. If we have made mistakes, we shall certainly, not only try but I hope to succeed in correcting them.

Enough has been said about the Railways all these days. I do not think any new idea can be thought of. Many persons from our side, my colleagues, have expressed our deep appreciation of the sense of patriotism and dedication of railway workers. They have run, our trains in times of danger, in times of war, in the midst of bullets and bombs. I personally shared the excitement in 1965 when I was going by train to see that effect of bombing in Punjab and our train was also shelled.

I agree with what hon. Member Mr. Frank Anthony has said about the devoted work of railway engine drivers and others. I myself have seen the special feeling almost personal attachment they have to the engines of which they were in charge. All this we appreciate. I do not say that Railways should be denied a higher wage that some other sections are getting. As many of our speakers have mentioned, our society is not divided into only two sections; bank workers and Railway workers. There are many crore or millions in between or rather, below them all.

I am not expressing my inner feelings now, because I do not wish unnecessarily to irritate you all. I am not attributing any motives. But what is the result? A few days ago, and even today, some people came to me and appealed to me to intervene. Many Members, Shri H.M. Patel and others, have lectured to us; they have given us the lectures which they should have aimed at the other side. Have Government threatened the strike? Have Government provoked the strike? (*Interruptions*) I am afraid that it does not matter how much you shout; it does not change facts. (*Interruptions*)

*** *** ***

That is exactly what I am doing. *I am telling you the truth. There was no indication at any time of any desire on the other side to withdrew the strike. Even though negotiations were going on, nobody there gave the impression that the strike would not take place. We were doing our utmost to try and prevent it until the very last moment...

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Arrests came at a very late stage**. When it was obvious—Some people have tried to make fun of what Shri Lalit Narayan quoted. But that was not the only newspaper that has published such speeches. I have not heard about the Dhanbad paper. But I know that the news has appeared in English and language newspapers in other parts of the country also. I do not have the newspapers here; even if I had them, I have no intention of quoting them. But that does not change that fact of those reports, those speeches appearing and giving an indication of exactly what the labour leaders had in mind.

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* Replying to a Member who said, "Tell us the facts".

** Responding to a Member's remark, "By arresting".

We are genuinely concerned about the interest of railway workers, but we have to be more concerned about the larger interests of the country. And if, at any moment, a strike is going to affect the larger interests, then action has to be taken. I am not talking about this strike or any particular strike. But when the larger welfare of our people is in stake, when sabotage is threatened—even today we have the news of a train being derailed—, we have to take action. Had we not taken the action which we considered appropriate, then the nation as a whole would have blamed us. (*Interruptions*) It was our assessment that this was one way in which the situation could be helped, and we acted. I personally feel that it had the right result—not in the sense that the strike has taken place because the strike was coming anyhow. Had we felt that there was even a one per cent chance of the strike being averted, believe me, the arrests would not have taken place and a lot of other things would not have taken place...

*** *** ***

How do you know the feelings that I had?* I am telling you my information and my feelings. How can you say that I am wrong? You can talk about your feelings.

There was one point on which we are agreed on all sides, and that is that the country is passing through an extremely difficult economic situation.... You have been saying so since the split. You have said it here, almost every week. Shri Mishra, I have no doubt you will continue to say it, but it will have no effect on the people.**

*** *** ***

The second point was that the strike is bound to bring about a deterioration in the situation and worsen it. These were the two points on which everybody agreed. Now, knowing that, the strike notice was given. Knowing that all preparations, open and covert ... (*Interruptions*). Yes, overt and covert, whatever it is. I am not a Professor in English...

*** *** ***

The strike is affecting the poorest and the weakest sections of the country. Now, you look to us to stop the strike. How can we stop the strike? We did not give notice of the strike. The strike was not called by the Government not caused by the Government, not precipitated by the Government.

*** *** ***

I am not concerned with the number of strikers. I do not want to debate how many trains are running or are not running. At least we heard one Member who had a ride by train and obviously he could not have arrived had the trains not been running. It was an Opposition Member....

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* Responding to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark, "You are wrong".

** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's comment, "Of your making".

Even among those who have refrained from coming to work there are several if not many–because it depends on what 'several'–means and what 'many' means–who would not have refrained, had they not been intimidated. Only yesterday we heard an hon. Member of the Opposition who is not favourably disposed to us, telling this House of the large number of telegrams he was receiving from railway workers in different parts of the country informing him of threats, intimidation and so on...

*** *** ***

It does not matter whom he talked about. *What he stated was that these people–whether they are anglo-Indians or Christians or Muslims or Hindus or anybody else, the fact is that they were intimidated, that they sent him telegrams asking that they be given protection. That is the point. That come at a much later stage when there was the question of sabotage, when there was... I do not want to go into the details because there has been sabotage already and we know that it was planned.**

*** *** ***

The strike is an unfortunate one. Again I repeat that we on this side are not against strikes. In fact, we are for strikes if they are legitimate strikes. But there comes a time in the life of a nation when other things are more important and urgent and it is such a time today. This is a time when each must see how the present situation cannot be improved. There is no doubt that the strike will not really help railwaymen. It is going to adversely affect the poorer people. It is going to cause inconvenience to the general public. And it will equally touch the future of the railwaymen and their children.

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We have tried our best to settle it.*** We think it will worsen the situation and if the situation worsens, so does the inconvenience to the poor people of the country. As Babuji said, lakhs and lakhs of people will not get food, will not get coal and all their other necessities. I am aware of the difficulties of railwaymen. These difficulties are not only theirs, they are shared by practically all sections. But the burden is far greater on those who are not organised today those whose voice cannot be heard so loudly and as Shri Priya Ranjan said, on the unemployed youth of the country. The more that is given to any organised section, the less is available for the unemployed and for all other sectors.

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The problem can be solved if everybody sits down together to see how it can be solved. Our problem is not that of the railway strike isolated from the rest of the country. The problem is a much larger one. On our part we are ready to talk and to reach agreement on

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* Responding to Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu's remark, "Why talk about anglo-Indians?"

** Replying to Shri Indrajit Gupta's question, "...Was not your Railway Minister everyday threatening to sack them?"

*** Responding to Shri Indrajit Gupta's remark, "Why not try to settle it?"

all that is reasonable and in the interest of the country. That is why even after the strike notice was given in the midst of negotiations, we continued the talks. We were always ready for talks.

But we have to consider who is threatening whom. The strike was a threat to us. It was hitting at the very foundation of our economy. The whole talk was one of threatening us. We were not threatening anybody. We were threatened that certain consequences would take place. (*Interruptions*)

It was only the Unions sitting there which were in a position to threaten and act. All we could do was to be on the defensive which we did. We took the actions which we consider necessary. We do not wish to use the B.S.F. or the police or the army against strikers as some hon. Members have alleged. We use them only to safeguard the interests of the railways, which are closely linked with the interests of the people at large.

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My colleague, the Railway Minister, has explained the extra burden which we have agreed to bear. That increase is over and above that which was due to the pay revision and the grant of D.A. to neutralise the rise in prices. But hon. Members know that the demands now made are far more sweeping. In fact, I think some Members have said in private that they know that these demands would be extremely difficult for Government to agree to. (*Interruptions*)

It is my information. Again, yours may be quite different. I must tell you that one particular group at one time or another has mentioned this.

We know that the wage structure in the country is not what it should be. We know that there is a great deal of injustice in it and that it is riddled with anomalies and contradictions. In the olden days, there was a bias against labourers and workers. We have done a great deal to correct this. This does not mean that we have got rid of the contradictions or that we have reached a satisfactory stage, I do realise that it is absolutely necessary to bring about some rationality in the wage structure. But this is a tremendous task which cannot be achieved overnight. It has to be done without causing too much dislocation. The matter is under the earnest consideration of the Government, and I shall certainly welcome any constructive suggestions which the hon. Members or others would like to give. I do think that this is one of the most urgent problems which we face. But it cannot be settled unless we stop adding to the wage bill at least for a short time. There are real difficulties and we must do our utmost to solve them. We have to keep in view the repercussions of each action. We have agreed to other demands. Whether those demands were just or not merely because we have agreed to some this has led to other demands. Each section says that since we have given increases to a particular section, why should we not also give to them? This is a continuing process. We have come to a stage when we do not have the wherewithal. Even if we had it, I do not think that it would be a right thing to do at this stage of our development, which is extremely critical and delicate.

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Well for my hon. friend opposite, probably the whole purpose of his participating in this debate was not so much to talk about the railway strike but to get in some words about the Plan.*

If it had not been so late I could have entered into a discussion on that matter also.

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This is the time when our undivided energies should be devoted to overcome the economic crisis. I personally do not think that the Plan is dead. We do have to make certain adjustments, because the increase in the price of fuel and various other items is bound to change the picture, but programmes have been taken in hand to increase our own power resources, fuel resources. Other programmes which are just as much part of the Plan are continuing. We are going ahead in spite of these obstacles and we are going to overcome them. The way to lighten the hardship is not by causing new hardships, not by preventing food movements, and coal movements, not by damaging production and exports and the country's economic wherewithal. It is a time when our undivided energies should be devoted to overcome this crisis, to increase production and to ensure fairer distribution. I do realise that distribution at this point is not at all fair, but this cannot be done immediately, especially at a time of economic difficulty. When it is a time to unite–although the Opposition seem to be united amongst themselves on this issue–on the whole, they have chosen this moment to divide the country to set group against group, and to sow distrust and cynicism.

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But our party elections have not sown cynicism or distrust of any kind.** They have been peaceful and friendly and we congratulate all those who have won, and even those who have not won. This is how democracy functions.

Opposition leaders have not hesitated to proclaim that their aim is to weaken the Government and it is not just one person's speech. You have only to see the newspapers of any single day, and you will see a number of such statements in magazines and newspapers. It does not matter if it is only the Government or the Congress Party which is weakened or which suffers, but it does matter if the country is weakened.

From the day that the Congress took office immediately after independence, it has devoted itself to the promotion of the workers' right and the workers' welfare. In the last few years, our policies have been even more pro-labour than earlier. I would even say that more has been done for the workers in the last five years than ever before in the history of our country. But to be pro-labour does not mean that one accepts all demands that are made–whether they are reasonable or not. We are pro-labour, but we are even more for the country. The country's interests come first and they are above the interests of any one section. Today we cannot afford the exorbitant demands that have been made, or the others

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* Responding to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark, "You have given a go by to development."

** Responding to Shri Piloo Mody's remark, "You had your party elections today."

that are being hinted on behalf of other sections. Should we agree to these demands ....If we agree to these demands, it would be satisfying a few lakh people at the expense of many crore...(*Interruptions*).

Shri Indrajit Gupta normally makes quite balanced speeches but I was astonished to hear him make a remark referring to Government going all out to please big business in India and the United States Ambassador or the United States administration or some such thing.

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It is needless to say, if I may use a para of my father's that "It is fantastic nonsense".

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That just shows how little the hon'ble Member had to say about the subject under discussions, when he resorted to such allegations.*

The Government and my party are always being accused of seeking scapegoats. Much vocal vehemence is spent on developing this theme and gallons of ink are used up in our newspapers and other areas for this purpose. They seem to find plenty of it.** I do not see any shortage in the newspapers either for advertisements or for abusing; both have plenty of them.

*** *** ***

Now, I would like to put another point of view. Does not the Opposition make a scapegoat of me for everything, their lack of initiative and inability to provide an alternative programme ?

*** *** ***

That is quite true.*** He will find that all the newspapers in India are all supporting the Congress and not one newspaper has even mentioned a word about the Opposition....What nonsense such statements are.

*** *** ***

Our party does not have its own newspapers amongst all the millions of newspapers that come out...

*** *** ***

We certainly have the All India Radio, and we shall continue to have it, and I want to state that the purpose of the radio is to project the policies of the Government****. Let me put it very clearly here. They are not the policies of the Congress. They are the policies which are accepted and passed by this Parliament and the State Assemblies.

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* Responding to Shri Indrajit Gupta's remark, "I am absolutely dumb-founded at this."

** Responding to Shri Piloo Mody's comment, "That is, if you find newsprint."

*** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra who said, "We are blacked out. They are full of praises for you".

**** Replying to Shri S.A. Shamim's remark, " She has All India Radio".

Mr. Mody is free to have any idea he likes. * But normally legislation is passed by a majority and not by a minority anywhere in the world.

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Governments are committed and pleaged to follow the policies that are passed in Parliament and in the Legislatures. **That is Government's major job.

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It is not blacked out. ***But that is the major job. It is not blacked out. It is not true to say that it is blacked out.....

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The very fact that they are all saying 'Do it' means that it has not been done so far.****

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You are saying that as an after thought; anyhow, we are not going to be bullied into doing any wrong by your shouting*****.

The Motion criticises Government for failure; in reality, it is a confession of the Opposition's frustration at their own failure and Government's ability to handle and overcome all the obstacles that they are constantly putting in our path. (*Interruptions*)

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Some difficulties are created by our mistakes. I have admitted it. But a lot are not created by our mistakes but by circumstances beyond our control, by outside aggression, by international crisis. There is a combination of many things. It is not any one of these things. I am not claiming that Government have made no mistakes. We have made mistakes. We are human. One mistake we have just admitted. When we find that we have made a mistake, we always try to rectify it. I have never stood on prestige or pride or anything of that kind. (*Interruptions*) I have said very clearly that if I were sure that by releasing those who have been imprisoned this problem would be solved, then there would be no hesitation.

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I do not want to prolong this debate. I repeat that we have full sympathy with the suffering of the railway people. We do not want them to suffer in any way or their families to suffer. We have always been prepared to talk and to alleviate their grievances. What we

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* Responding to Shri Piloo Mody's remarks, "According to the Prime Minister, Parliament consists of only Government or the majority. I am sorry that is not my idea of Parliament."

** Responding to Shri Piloo Mody's remarks, " I am not talking about legislation. When she talks about Government policies, there is a policy in the Opposition also, and both policies should be put squarely before the people."

*** Replying to Shri Shyamnadan Mishra's comment " All other points of view must be blacked out?"

**** Referring some members who said, "Do it."

***** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra who said, "Go on doing it".

have done to meet their grievances has been explained by the Railway Minister, by Shri Qureshi and others. Many of their points have been met. I know they have been met. I think this will go a long way in removing some of the basic hardship.

There are one or two points on which Government are not able to agree. I think everyone of you, if you consider the matter in depth, will realize that those are things we simply cannot think about now. We cannot even say that we agree on principle because then it would open the door to further demands by other sections. But we are thinking about the entire wage structure. With all our effort not to create dislocation I am afraid any basic change will create dislocation. At that moment, all honourable members opposite will be there to exploit the situation which will arise because of that dislocation. And if there is someone who is not getting a raise or may be getting a little less than others, then their unions–they are not our unions–will be incited to go on strike. So this is the situation. This is what I mean when I say that the Opposition creates trouble. I do not mean that they are creating the shortages or they are responsible for all developments.

Many hon. Members themselves confessed that the main purport of the no-confidence motion was not no-confidence at all, and that the motion was brought merely because yesterday a debate was not allowed–actually, this had nothing to do with the Government, because we were not asked.... (*Interruptions*) No, we did not interfere with the Speakers ruling in this case. He looked up the rules and several Members, including those of the Opposition, aided him about what the rules said. So, I hope that all these considerations.... (*Interruptions*) We are not at this moment discussing the ruling. All I am saying is that several hon. Members from Opposition began their speeches yesterday by saying that this no-confidence motion would not have come, had an adjournment motion or a debate been allowed the day before....

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Not yesterday but the day before, because it is already the 10 (*Interruptions*). Therefore, now that they have had their debate, and they have all had their say, I hope they will withdraw their no-confidence motion.

Anti-Inflationary Programmes*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, many Members have called this a ritual performance and, as my colleague said earlier, it has indeed become regular...

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Feature... We have come to expect a no-confidence motion in every session of the House. I am not, as one hon. Member of the Opposition has claimed, allergic to such a motion; none of us is, in fact, I welcome them. It is one of the few occasions I get to speak in the House. It gives us an opportunity of telling the House what determined efforts we are making to face the present situation. But listening to many of the speeches of the Members opposite, it did not seem to me that they were taking their own motion very seriously. We do take it seriously. We welcome this opportunity. But I would also say that I was a little surprised that this motion should come up when it did. Only the day before, we had a very friendly meeting with the leaders of the Opposition.

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For the first time after a long time it was not acrimonious and in that meeting we discussed what subjects should be further discussed, and also whether they were all willing to try to find some areas in which we could cooperate. The very next day, after this friendly beginning, it came as a surprise to me when I heard that there was a No-confidence Motion..

How little faith you have in this No-confidence Motion was displayed by a chivalrous friend opposite when, far from trying to remove us, he wanted to help us to remain by his good advice.

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Apart from all this joking**, the situation is indeed serious. At no time have we said that it is not serious. At no time have we tried to absolve ourselves from all responsibility. It is obvious that the government of the day is responsible for whatever happens. But

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion of No-Confidence in the Council of Ministers, *L.S. Deb.*, 25 July, 1974, cc. 296-317.

** Commenting upon Shri Piloo Mody's remarks, "What I implied was that this Government should go and a new Government be reconstituted. This is what the No-Confidence Motion is about" *and also on* Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's comment, "That means, you have faith in the Prime Minister and she is to re-constitute the Cabinet" in response to which Shri Piloo Mody further said, "I have reconstituted the Cabinet."

Opposition Members are in the habit of taking out any one statement out of the speeches that my colleagues or I make and then projecting it as if that was the only point made at that particular meeting. Usually, in speeches, we mention many aspects. If I said that inflation was a global phenomenon—it is a global phenomenon—but I did not say it was entirely due to that. In fact, I explained the differences also. I am only giving this as an instance.

Twenty years ago, in the United States, a particular Senator created a situation when everyone was suspected, and even honest and upright people of all sections were persecuted in the name of supposed loyalty to the country. At that time, this shadow fell on us also. At one time, there were loud voices of criticism from people who saw communism lurking not only in the communist party but also in our party.

Today, everything is made to look corrupt. Everyone is painted in black colours in the hope that at least a few people will believe some of these false charges.

Several of the speeches made by hon. Members of the Opposition have been full of insinuations and fabrications. Again many matters have been raised not for the first time but which have come up during Question Hour, during Half-an-Hour Discussions and on other occasions, and full replies have been given.

I have enough faith in the good sense of our people. I know that they will not be misled. I do not have to defend myself. I think, the people of the country will defend me if they so choose and, if they do not so choose, I shall still abide by their verdict. We believe in democracy and we always accept the people's verdict. It is very strange to say that if some of us win the elections, we do it only through black money but if somebody on the other side wins it, then the people have really, and truly, elected him ! (*Interruptions*) Please do not go into all those things. We can also take many names if we wish to do so. But I do not want to make any allegations, nor do I want to go into all those matters as to who was associated with whom, who collected money and such other matters. This Government, this Party and I shall always abide by the people's verdict. We shall be judged by how we serve the people, what we do to lighten their burden of ancient wrongs, injustices and inequalities, to what extent we are able to help them to defend their freedoms and how far we can harness their inner strength towards a more meaningful life. I think, these are the matters on which the country will judge us, and if they want to throw us out, we shall take it in that spirit and we shall not behave like all the present opposition parties alleging that somebody came in through false methods and so on.

I would only ask the hon. Members of the Opposition not to underrate the strength of our people, because in spite of all the present hardships—we are not minimising the hardships by any means—the nation is far stronger than it has ever been ; it is certainly far stronger than what it was in 1947. In fact, it is this strength and this self-confidence which has enabled us to meet the political burdens of 1971 or the economic burdens of today.

Much has been said about the railway strike. I do not want to go into details because we had a motion on it on the last day of the last Session and this time also several people

on our side have spoken about it; the Railway Minister has spoken; and most of the points made on the other side were made on the previous occasion also.

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At that time also you spoke about it. Now you say that it came afterwards*. But at that time you said that it was taking place. On any such occasions, there are cases of excesses. I cannot say to what extent this has happened in this particular case. But knowing the situation, I know that somehow some excesses do take place in spite of our best intentions. However, nobody has ever been told to victimise or harass any person. ....So far as I know, considering the very large numbers of people involved, considering the gravity of the situation, one can say that there was hardly any victimisation. We are treating—and I would like to assure the hon. Members that we shall continue to treat—with sympathy those amongst the railwaymen who were misguided into going on the strike. And it is only the intention of those politicians who forced the strike which we consider to be frankly partisan and political. They did the worst they could do. (*Interruptions*) I know that a large number of railwaymen did go on strike. Nobody says that they did not. But I also know that a much larger number did not go on strike and they managed, in spite of tremendous odds, to keep the trains running.

Fortunately, supplies to key industrial installations and feed movements were maintained...(*Interruptions*). The country is aware of the great harm that was inflicted upon the national economy. It is not easy to absorb the damage of round-about Rs. 600 crore.

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I think before you came here. I have already said that I do not shirk any responsibility.** I am willing to take the responsibility for what we have done, if you want, even for what we have not done and even for what you have done; but let us not waste time in arguing about it.

One hon. Member referred—I think he used the word 'delight'—that we were delighted or that we were crowing over the victory. I should like to sincerely assure him that this is a rather strange word to use. None of us could view the problem in that light. We were not delighted at crushing the strike. We were not crowing over, nor did we regard it as a victory...

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We were greatly saddened and distressed over the whole situation and at the hardship of the railwaymen and their families, the inconveniences to which the common man and the poorer sections of the people were put, and the grave consequences to the nation's economy and strength. There was no question of delight, but, as I said, the situation was so serious that it was a relief that the strike was over and this relief was shared by the vast majority of the Indian people.

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* Replying to a Member's remark, "Victimisation came afterwards."

** Replying to Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu's remark, "Rs. 1000 crore."

One of the other misconceptions created by the other side is the constant use of the word 'wage-freeze'. My colleague, the Finance Minister, I think, the Defence Minister also as well as various members from this side have already clarified the point. But if I also do not state my viewpoint, then you will accuse me—'You did not say'. Therefore, some of it I have to repeat.

What the Government proposes is not a wage-freeze, as hon. Members have alleged. A wage-freeze would mean a ban on negotiations or on revision of wages. This is not what we have done. What we have done is not to impose any embargo on negotiations for wage revision either in the public or in the private sector. What we have done to enforce through these ordinances is that if as a result of wage revision, the workers become entitled to some increase in the emoluments, such increase should be deposited in a special account carrying a special rate of interest.

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The ordinance only asks the labour to save the increase in their emoluments for a certain limited period so as to give some respite to bring the inflationary situation under control. The amount saved by the workers is theirs and it will not be used by the Government, even temporarily, either for its current expenditure or for industries.

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Our workers have been actuated by patriotic motives. In the past they have loaned money to the Government under various schemes. There is the small savings scheme. There is the pay-roll savings scheme, cumulative deposits scheme etc., to meet the emergencies posed by war or by influx of refugees and so on.

The present inflationary situation poses, as my friend opposite, Dr. Rao, said, a grave threat to our social and political systems as the invasion we have faced.

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We all know, and everybody here has commented on the fact, that inflation is the worst enemy of social justice. So, any step we take to curb inflation can be considered egalitarian.

The ordinance provides for the payment of dearness allowance into a special account, that is, only half the additional dearness allowance falling due for payment. The idea of compensating labour for the increase in the cost of living through the periodical adjustment of the dearness allowance was evolved during the second world war. Has this system really provided an effective safeguard ? This is the question which arises. Labour representatives and others are aware that an increase in dearness allowance is often only an invitation to traders to push up their prices. It is a spiral or vicious circle. As soon as dearness allowance is given, prices rise and more dearness allowance is demanded.

Many factors contribute to the rise in prices and all these have to be tackled together. You cannot look at only one side of the problem. A pertinent point made by Dr. Rao was

that in recent months, an inflationary psychology has been building up. Traders and hoarders profit in such an atmosphere. People expect prices to rise continually and since income can only rise partially, they can never catch up with this rise in prices. So, this psychology has to be effectively countered. Slowing down the process of the continuous injection of money into the economy is one of the important steps by which we can hope to defeat the expectations of traders and hoarders. This steep reduction in the expansion of money supply has been accompanied and is going to be followed further by other energetic measures such as curtailing unnecessary Government expenditure and by augmenting production in strategic sectors of our economy.

The House will perhaps remember that this is not the first time that either a part or the whole of the dearness allowance has been impounded in the form of contributions of provident fund or otherwise. Many State Governments, in fact eight, from different regions of the country, have also done likewise for several years. The Government of India also took similar steps in 1967-68 when we were just recovering from an unprecedented drought.

So, all that we have now done is to extend the scheme so as to cover employees of the private sector, in the interest of parity of treatment. This is the only new thing that has come about. The amounts paid into a special account may be retained for a slightly longer period than in the case of the scheme enforced in the past, but, at the same time, if the period of retention is longer, the rate of interest is also appreciably higher.

I should like to appeal to workers to try to understand that an increase in money wages will not help them unless an effective anti-inflationary campaign is launched and is successful.

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An increase in wages to workers will not help them. As regards welfare of the workers, a very large number of them are unorganised labour. Their welfare depends on our success in bringing the prices under control. I have no doubt about that. We have brought forward all these measures in order to try to deal with this situation. (*Interruptions*). There can be growth in the economy if the extreme measures we have taken succeed. At the same time, I am sure, hon. Members are aware that every sanctioning or giving of Dearness Allowance has an immediate effect on the finances of State Governments and their capacity to continue their programmes, whether of development or of helping the weaker sections. Many essential programmes are affected, because more and more money goes into administrative costs.

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We cannot do that through an Ordinance*. We can only take certain steps. We are trying to arrest the inflation as a first step. Only then, can we think of checking the price rise. (*Interruptions*).

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* Replying to Shri Indrajit Gupta's question, "Why don't you freeze the price ?"

Members of the Opposition want to have the cake and eat it too. Everyone wants opposite things to happen simultaneously. They want Government to curb the money supply and at the same time criticize Government when it takes concrete steps to do so. I fully realise that logical consistency is not the strong point of the Opposition, especially when each party has its own theory of politics and economics and its own point of view.

Now, some Members of the Opposition, particularly, those claiming to be radical, have often pointed out that it is no use trying to control Government's budgetary deficit alone. Bank credit to the commercial sector should also be brought under strict surveillance. The rise in the bank rate and corresponding adjustments in rates of interest charged by the banks on loans to different categories of borrowers will slow down the pace of expansion of credits to the commercial sector. The rise in interest rates will discourage the build-up of inventories. At the same time, the rise in deposit rates will benefit savers and enable the banks to mobilize savings both in urban and in rural areas. You have probably heard that the Reserve Bank is arranging a strict scrutiny of the top accounts of all the banks. This scrutiny will strengthen our attempts to control the use of bank money for building inventories or for other purposes which are of a lower priority. (*Interruptions*). The private sector has to be subjected to the same degree of fiscal discipline which the people rightly expect the Government to observe in the present difficult situation.

We have to enforce discipline not merely in the use of financial resources but also in the use of other scarce materials such as steel and cement. These proposals are being worked out in some detail. All these measures relating to wages, dearness allowance, dividends and compulsory savings for the higher income groups, control of credit to the private sector and discipline in the use of the scarce material should be viewed together.

At the same time, I agree with all the Members who have raised the point—many of them have—that we have to take care of the necessary supplies; in particular, we have to augment supply of articles of mass consumption, of what the economists call wage goods, that is, foodgrains, common cloth...edible oil and so on.

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Equally important at this moment, in fact, of the utmost importance, is agricultural production. That holds the key to the success of our efforts at controlling prices.

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Fertiliser is in a class by itself, and I do not think that it can be mixed up with other items*. It is essential for our farmers and we are doing everything possible not only to increase its production in India but to get whatever is available from outside and simultaneously to maximise the utilisation of composit and organic fertiliser.

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It is not a going-back. These are two different situations**. One type of simple life is where you have not known anything like science or sophistication, and the other is that

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* Replying to Shri Madhu Limaye's question, "What about increase in fertiliser prices ?"

** Replying to Shri B.N. Reddy's remark, "We go back to Ramrajya".

having the knowledge and the experience you go to a simple life, using what you have learnt in the meantime. That is the type of simplicity that we want. So, it is not going back to the old.

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I was just talking about agricultural production. Hon. Members are aware that I have been going round with my colleagues and with other experts and officials to various States. We have asked the Chief Ministers to immediately personally direct, guide and supervise agricultural production programmes in their States....

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Perhaps, he can go and ask the other people who attended the conference*. I have found great enthusiasm amongst our young and other older workers also at district and other levels in the States, and I have found that this exchange of views has been extremely useful to the Centre as well as to the States. There has unfortunately not been adequate co-ordination between the experience of one State and the experience of another. This is going to be very useful.

In the whole world, whether it is in agriculture or in other subjects, our knowledge is increasing all the time and there has to be proper application of it.

Recently I also met some of the heads of our agricultural colleges. We have to give the greatest priority to our extension work. Their extension workers are doing extremely good work, but this has to be strengthened and expanded.

A great deal has been said about black money. My colleague, the Finance Minister, has explained the steps that are being taken. Some important aspects of the problem are often ignored.

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In a sense, black money is a creature of shortages. So one of the effective means of dealing with the problem is to remove the vested interests in shortages and to increase production. Some of the steps taken to increase production such as higher procurement prices for foodgrains themselves tend to effect a rise in prices. It is also true that some of the controls to check prices have bred corruption. We simply cannot say that all controls can be removed. If they could be removed without increasing the growth of economic monopoly, then we could do so.We have to see how to minimise malpractices and see that nobody takes advantage of the situation.

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We have acknowledged that some monopoly houses or all monopoly houses have taken advantage of the situation and this is one of the problems which we have to face. Certainly they have to be dealt with very strongly**.

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* Responding to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's question, "What did the Prime Minister do in the conferences which she had ? She added only culture to agriculture ?"

** Replying to Shri Bhogendra Jha's remark, "Except the monopolists".

So this is the paradox of the situation underlying the complexity of the problem we face. It is easy for the Opposition to speak different things at different times and in different voices. They demand higher procurement price for one section and lower prices for another section, continuance of subsidy for one section and so on and so forth. But it is just not possible to have all these things simultaneously. In the circumstances in which we find ourselves today, larger production of essential goods and an efficient public distribution system should be the most essential components of our programme against black money. Of course, this must be supplemented by the firmest action against hoarders and tax evaders.

Something must also be said about smuggling. This is also an evil. It must be combated with all our strength. On an earlier occasion, I spoke about it somewhere. The Defence Minister has also spoken about it though not here. One hon. Member quoted his speech misinterpreting it that Government wanted to put all the responsibility on the people. That is not the point at all. The point is that in these matters unless we have the co-operation of the people, we cannot tackle it. This is not a matter which the army can deal with; it is not a matter which the police can deal with. It is a matter where the neighbours of those who indulge in anti-social acts are the first people who can help to solve this. This I think, is, what the Defence Minister said.

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I have been talking about this subject long ago. But Shri Madhu Mehta has added his voice to this and I welcome it.* He is taking interest in this anti-smuggling campaign. As a part of this campaign, he has also suggested that at least everybody should boycott all smuggled goods. That is the least that everybody can do. I would like very strongly to commend that.

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I have also said–this was said by the Defence Minister too–that there should be a social boycott of all those people whether they are smugglers, tax evaders, hoarders or black marketeers.**

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A group of Ministers is trying to recast our textile policy because it is true that although the textile producers and millowners have made very large profits, they have not abided by our rules for producing larger quantities of the type of cloth that is needed by the people. So, we are going to impose definite obligations on the textile mills to produce common cloth of coarse and medium varieties. This policy will be vigorously imposed, and all those who come in the way of effective implementation of this policy will be dealt with ruthlessly. The textile industry, which is our most important industry, has to accept certain social obligations. If it defaults in the fulfilment of these obligations, the full force of Government will be brought to bear on the defaulting mills.

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* Replying to Shri Piloo Mody's question, "Why don't you join Madhu Mehta ?"

** Answering Shri Indrajit Gupta's question, "What about boycotting of smugglers who are in respectable positions?"

Several Members have talked about transport and power bottlenecks. These are really of grave concern to all of us and we are trying to remove the difficulties which have come in the way. Last year there was a big shortfall in production, but this year, there has been significant improvement in the movement of vital raw materials like coal. Even during the railway strike, this improvement was evident. We are grateful to the railway workers for this.

With regard to power also, I have been in close touch with the Chief Ministers and we are all looking into the problems of generation as well as distribution of power. There are some signs of significant improvement.

I should like to tell the House that adequate imports of foodgrains to supplement domestic availability have been arranged. I do not think it would help to give figures here, because we know that our food statistics have been distorted by traders at home and for manipulation in foreign markets. This had an immediate effect on the prices. So, the import of foodgrains should enable us to maintain the public distribution system at a satisfactory level. At the same time, vigorous action will be taken against hoarders and profiteers. But again this is a matter in which public co-operation and co-operation of all parties is very much needed. I know there have been cases where the district authorities have not taken kindly to such help, but wherever such instances have been brought to our notice, we have looked into them and I think the situation in this regard has improved, and the Government's performance has improved. I am sorry to hear that in Bihar there are some students involved in the agitation who have tried to prevent anti-hoarding activities.

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These are the reports which we have received*.

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Just now we are talking about foodgrains and suddenly you jump to examination**. I am informing them about one or two incidents which came to our notice. So far as my knowledge goes, this information has appeared in the Press, but it has not been denied.

I should like to go back to what I was saying, namely, we have to fight the menace of inflation with united will and determination. We seek the co-operation of all sections of society, of our workers in factories, on the land and in farms, even of the businessman and industrialists–because, we want to say to them this is not the time to take advantage of the difficulties of the people–and the civil servants at all levels in implementing our anti-inflationary programme. I appeal to the Opposition also to help and not hinder these attempts of ours.

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* Responding to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark, "Completely wrong".

** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra who intervened and said that he wanted to bring to the notice of the Prime Minister one Circular which showed how unfair means had been permitted by the University in the examination halls and remarked, "That is how you are conducting the examinations."

I have been twitted by some opposition leader for referring to inflation in other countries. I should like to say that I have never over-simplified our inflation by saying that it is wholly due to what happens outside. But no one can deny that parts of our economy are directly affected by the rise in prices of vital imports. There is a steep rise in the prices of petroleum products and of fertilizers and we have to pay more for our imports, wherever they come from. This is an economic reality. Foreign exchange resources which could have been used to import other essential goods in short supply have been absorbed by the mounting bill on imports of oil and one or two other commodities.

So, to the Opposition I would only say: do criticise us to your heart's content, as often as you like, with all the vehemence and oratory at your command.

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We will go the way which we consider right.* If you are able to convince us on some points, we shall not stand on prestige; we shall accept your suggestion. We rarely get any alternative formulations. There has been advice as to how to change the government, when to change it and so on.

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We certainly do not object, as I think one hon. Member alleged, to one or more Opposition parties. But what saddens us is that the Opposition is obsessed by only one thing, and that is the Congress party, what is the Congress Party doing, what is it saying in its party forums, what is being said in Central Hall. They are far more occupied with these matters than by the basic problems of the country. This is what pains us.

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If you were not so obsessed with us you would not bother about our circulars to our own members**. Since you have given so much advice, may I give you advice on how to strengthen the Opposition ?

If you get rid of this obsession with the Congress party and deal with your own problems, deal with the problems of the country, you will find that you will gather more strength. We shall not be able to erode that strength.

We have also been accused of doing everything for votes. Simultaneously, the same people tell us that our Ordinances are very unpopular. How can both the statements be true ? It is not that we disregard the people's verdict. As I have already said, we will always regard the people's verdict. We have the greatest respect and faith in the people. But we do take steps which we consider necessary even though they may annoy one section or another or are misunderstood by one section or another. I have said this publicly. Every political party would like to remain in power. But I can assure hon. Members opposite

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* Responding to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's comment, "But you will go your own way."

** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's observation, "Your party issued a circular even about your members hobnobbing with Members of the Opposition".

that I personally have no desire that I should remain permanently in power or even that the Congress Party should remain permanently in power.

What I should like to say is that while we would certainly like to have the people's support it is more important for us to do the right thing today even if by doing so, we create a better atmosphere for the Opposition to win in the future.

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Not solicitous*. What I am saying is that we are concerned for the future of the country, even though it may make us do something which may be misunderstood by certain people today and it may even turn them against us. Even then, we have to do what will strengthen the foundation of this country and what we consider to be for the people's welfare and for a better future.

One thing more. Let the opposition parties not make out that the Indian people are a race of mean men and women. This is not a selfish nation; this is not a corrupt nation. This is a nation which has seen visions of greatness, greatness not of conventional armed might or economic arrogance, but a greatness measured in terms of human worth. What can we ever achieve if we erode the people's pride in their own country, pride in themselves, pride in their capacity to do things. There are people who run down themselves. But the future is not going to be built by them. So, I would only request the hon. Members opposite not to weaken the people's will to face this challenge.

As I have said earlier, the people have shown determination; they have shown tremendous forbearance, the capacity to face hardships, the capacity to face danger. And today we face all these things. There is a tremendous challenge to us on the economic front and on many other front. We can face them only if the people are convinced that they are able to face them. Saying all the time that nothing has happened, that the nation is going down-hill which, of course, is not a fact at all and in spite of the many hardships and difficulties, it is not going down-hill, it is not in a state of ruin or chaos...(*Interruptions*).

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I am not entering into any confrontation with you. I am not going to be provoked by anything that you say**. It is not a question of using particular words. It is the day-in and day-out sayings which weaken the people's will in their own ability. This has been told to me by young scientists, this has been said by engineers, this has been said by farmers; almost every section says day-in and day-out the country is being denigrated. If this country is going down-hill, let some of us, those who can afford it at least, leave it and go to other countries. This is the type of atmosphere that has been built. So I would only urge on this House to demonstrate our will and our determination to face this challenge with courage, determination and humour by rejecting this motion.

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* Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark, "Solicitous".

** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra, who said, "I challenge. Can you give me even a single instance?"

Decline in Economic Growth Rate*

Mr. Speaker, if I may start with the last speaker's** remarks, it was rather astonishing and amazing—I do not know what word to use—to hear the words corruption and our taking people away from one party to another used in connection with Gujarat. Perhaps the hon. Member remembers that when the movement started in Gujarat, it started because one particular individual—I am not blaming him, nor am I judging him here, I am only saying what was said...

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There was one individual who was blamed by the entire Opposition. He was blamed by the press, and various allegations were made against him. Now, we were prepared to look into these allegations provided we had full information. Various individuals came to me and said that they would give the information so that we could enquire into them. We asked this person to resign from Chief Ministership because of the allegations.

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I do not know***, I am not judging him, I said, but when he resigned and formed another party, he seemed to suddenly become blameless and all these people were making arrangements with him and his party (*Interruptions*). I am not giving him a certificate (*Interruptions*). Because hon. Members are in the habit of misquoting. They imagine that I do the same. I always give what I consider an honest assessment (*Interruptions*). I should like to say that I had given an earlier assessment of the internal situation. I have heard similar remarks passed in this House before the previous elections also. I gave my assessment then, and I would like to know whose assessment came true ? I have given my assessment about the international situation. I have been ridiculed and abused; I have been criticised. But I should like to know whose assessment has come true ultimately ? Whatever we have said about any part of the world...

Whether it was West Asia, or whether it was Vietnam...(*Interruptions*).

That is the reason why, no matter what hon. Members opposite may say, India's voice is heard with respect in every part of the globe, in every international gathering. Your saying that it is not true, does not change the truth (*Interruptions*).

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion of No-Confidence in the Council of Ministers, *L.S. Deb.*, 9 May, 1975. cc. 523-84.

** Shri P. G. Mavalankar.

*** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark, "So, he was a lily-white !"

I am prepared to bear and I have borne all types of abuses, false allegations and the sort of language that one sometimes hears in this House. Whenever we try to reply, even in a very small way the entire Opposition gets so upset that they cannot bear it; they could not bear even the mild speech of my colleague Shri Jagjivan Ram... *(Interruptions)*

I do not claim brilliance ; I do not claim sincerity. I do speak from the heart; I do say what I really think.

I did not make a noise when any Member from the opposite side was speaking. I did interrupt a few times, because Shyamnandan Babu said, he was enjoying it *(Interruptions)* and felt happy ! This was the only reason why I interrupted him a couple of times. I did not interrupt anybody else.

These years have been exceedingly difficult not only for our country, but for the whole world, for every country. It is not true to say that it is only the capitalist world which is free from these difficulties. We have had leaders from other countries as well. It is not as if they did not talk of these matters. All of them said that the inflation had hit their economies. That is why none of their newspapers, none of those countries, has exploited this crisis to malign the capitalist countries as one might have expected them to do. They appreciated the fact that any kind of instability in Europe, any kind of upsetting of the European economy was bound to affect their economies and their countries.

Today, the world is not divided and isolated into separate islands. It is one world. Some people may say that their is a second world, a third world or a fourth world. It is one world. Each, country has its own policies, difficulties, problems and view points, yet it is one world, and every country is affected by what happens in other countries. It is not true to say that our problems are the same as those of other countries. It is perfectly true as hon. Members have said that when there was inflation in European countries, they were able to help the unemployed, they were able to give higher wages. But this does not mean that the basic situation is different or that the causes are entirely within our control. I am not saying that we are faultless. Nobody has said that. Nobody has claimed that there would be a miraculous change either in the poverty of India or the economic standards of India or in the lessening of disparities. These are the objectives towards which we are working. We are struggling. We do fall in the struggle, but we also get up again and again and keep going ahead.

Time and again, we have had aggression. There are few countries in the world which have faced so many difficult problems and challenges. After Independence and more specially in the last few years, India has faced many problems and challenges. Some were due to our own mistakes; some because we did not foresee the difficulties and we could not make a correct assessment. Certainly, we are not faultless; we are human. But many difficulties arose because of events which were beyond our control. The hon. Member very grandly asked : What has been achieved in these last few years ? Has he forgotten what has been achieved ? Have the House forgotten it ? Has the world forgotten it ? Was it a small thing for us to face the Bangladesh crisis as we did ? Was it a small thing to face tremendous droughts as we did ? *(Interruptions)* Certainly, we shall capitalise on any good achievement.

Let us not compare our country with countries which started at higher levels of development. Let us compare ourselves, as Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munsi or somebody else here said, with countries which are around us. How much democracy do we see here ? (*Interruptions*) I am not yielding poverty is there. It is not a poverty that suddenly errupted. May be, our young people do not know what poverty was like in India before Independence (*Interruptions*). I have travelled in this country, in the villages and in the cities. I have no hesitation in saying that there is not the sort of poverty which we used to see 10 or 15 years ago. There is absolutely no doubt about it. Anybody, whether he has come from outside or anybody in our own country who has taken the trouble to go round the country will agree. This does not mean that we do not have pockets of poverty and hardship. Of course, they exist. But the question is : Could we have changed this situation in a few years ? We simply could not.

Do you think a few years is much in the life of a nation ? This nation was under feudalism and it was under colonialism for so long. Immediately after we became free, we had all the troubles of Partition and immediately afterwards we had aggression. It was not an ordinary thing. I should like you to know that even in those countries where a certain amount of equality has been achieved, if you go to see the standard of the people in the interior pockets of those countries, you will see what people eat and how they live.

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I do not think that the standard there is much higher for all the people* (*Interruptions*). You may like the system that China has. I think, most of us here would not tolerate that system. Specially those who dare to talk about democracy, would they like to have the kind of system that China has, where nobody is allowed to speak ? I do know something about China and of Vietnam. In fact, I had the great privilege of considering Dr. Ho Chi Minh as a friend (*Interruptions*). Just shouting like this does not change the situation. I happen to be on my legs. If I have to be heard, I have to raise my voice. It does not mean that those who are sitting should shout at the same time.

As it has been said, this No-confidence Motion has become a ritual.

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Every time they feel that they must have a no-confidence motion at the beginning, somehow every time there is a noise that it is going to take place in the beginning, but I do not know what happens, whether they cannot muster the number of people so quickly or what; this time also we were informed, at least I was informed, that it would be on the 8th; I reorganized my programme to enable me to be here that day; then suddenly we were told that it was not on the 8th, it was the 9th...

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* Replying to a Member's question, "What about Korea ?"

The Minister told me.* I was given in writing (*Interruptions*). It is not a figment of imagination.

This is no consultation**. Surely, if there is a motion of no-confidence, it has to be conveyed to the Prime Minister. It has nothing to do with one secretariat or another...(*Interruptions*). I do not know why he is getting so excited. One of the charms of Shyamnandan Babu used to be his sense of humour, but sometimes he seems to lose it, and this is one of those occasions.

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...I have said this many times, but I have to repeat it because the allegations are repeated. What are the norms which we use in judging whether this is democracy or anything else ? I heard one hon. Member there taunting my colleague whether he knows of this change or that change whether I changed anybody as I liked? Now, as it has happened, I do consult my colleagues. But if you see how democracy works in other countries including the U.K. which is supposed to be the mother of Parliaments or any other country, does the Prime Minister not reshuffle the Cabinet or drop any member of it? Does he consult people to say who will be there ? As a matter of fact, my friend here will bear me out. Once we were sitting with a Minister from another country, a democratic European country who exclaimed that such and such Minister in his country had been there for a long time and that he had been changed; when asked after how long, he said that he was there for three years and that his portfolio was being changed. I don't think his opinion was taken for changing the portfolio. When we consider these things, we have to have some norms, how democracy works in other countries...(*Interruptions*). I do not want to argue on this point, because it is self-evident. There is freedom of speech. I think, Mr. Frank Anthony spoke of the Fundamental Rights...

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Is it not an insult to an hon. Member to accuse him in this manner*** ? He is a senior Member of this House...(*Interruptions*)

What greater proof is there of freedom of speech, than the meetings that are held and the speeches that are made and what appears in our newspapers and other publications ? What greater evidence could one need of freedom of association than is there...(*Interruptions*).

It is only in respect of those people who indulge in violence or some such thing that any action has been taken. If there is any wrong action, we shall certainly correct it. There is no doubt about it. The MISA etc., are not political instruments. The country has gone through and is going through an extremely difficult period. We have not suppressed any agitation...(*Interruptions*).

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* Replying to a Member's question, "Who told you ?"

** Commenting upon Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's intervention, "It is our sweet will, our privilege, our prerogative. We do not depend on anybody else. Sir, let your office not act in concert with the Prime Minister's office in many matters; we have many papers being passed on by your office to the Prime Minister's office. (*Interruptions*)".

*** Reacting to Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu's remark, "He was specially sent for over the telephone to make a speech".

Shri Mavalankar spoke about electoral reforms in Gujarat. You have discussed the matter while I was away and I think, a great deal was decided. A meeting was supposed to be held after my return.

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We are not responsible for that*. I got a message from the Minister that he had received a letter asking that the meeting be postponed. That is why it was not held. We are not responsible for postponing it...(*Interruptions*).

I am glad that a dialogue has begun and I do hope, we shall try to keep acrimony out of it. There are many areas in which there can be a dialogue and working together and we should always try for it.....(*Interruptions*)

The tasks for the Government are many, but the first and foremost task is to hold this land of great diversity together and to give it stability. This is what we are trying to do. I was not here, when the hon. Member opposite spoke. He tried to say that we were trying to create chaos. Nobody who watches the Indian scene can say that the Government is creating chaos. It is obviously these agitations which started non-violently which have always created violence around them. Certain institutions.... are responsible for this.

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The people have given full support to our endeavour to check inflation in spite of tremendous difficulties. We are aware that these measures were unpopular measures. We are aware that they did impose hardship on the workers, the farmers, the salary earners the housewives and everybody. And yet, I think people tried to see the bigger question that more inflation would create greater difficulty in future and that is why I think they bore these difficulties. We are not complacent. We know that inflationary pressures have not been fully contained, but, unfortunately, already the Opposition is bullying us to withdraw some of these measures. But we cannot afford to relax our efforts.

I have already spoken of how economic development has been slowed down because of these forces. Unemployment is there. We do not deny it. But our revised Plan will stimulate industry and overall, production and will lead to the generation of jobs, specially, for skilled hands. If the nation is to find more employment, the wage demands of those already employed will have to be held in check. The Opposition encourages workers to demand higher emoluments and, at the same time, they pay lip service to the unemployed.

There is no question of any slackening of our efforts against smuggling and other economic crimes. We have to pursue these matters. Sometimes, in the beginning, such news sound more spectacular and now it has become a little stale, but the work is continuing. I wish the Opposition would live not in an imaginary world of its own fabrication but try to see the reality of to-day.

We have been accused of serving the interests of foreign monopolists or the Indian monopolists. There are some advocates of Indian capital and monopolists in this very House

* Responding to Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu's remark, "It was never held".

and most of them are in the Opposition...(*Interruptions*). They always try to run down our public sector and praise the efficiency of the capitalist system. Our objective is clear and our record is straight. We want to run the economy in such a way that the interests of the masses are safeguarded and the power of monopoly is curtailed whenever it grows.

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Many tales have been told and many charges have been repeated. I am not going to go into them because the concerned Ministers have replied to them in both Houses. The habit of naming officials is unfortunate. I thought there was a rule that officials who cannot defend themselves here should not be named in the House. Something was said about an official in my Secretariat. If there are certain problems, meetings are held. But it is absolutely untrue to say that any deal was struck with businessmen or any industrialists were present at any meeting in his room or, so far as I am aware, at any other place in my Secretariat...

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Obviously, I am sure there are occasions when, for instance, members of Chambers of Commerce or other associations come to me in groups everytime they get elected and various other organisations such as labour unions, also come and see me*.

Much has been said about the emergency. I think anybody who is following international trends and the news of the world can see that the whole world situation is in a flux and that means that it is a period when anything can happen. Arms have accumulated in our region. There are new pressures in the seas around us and we should not weaken the government at such a time...

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Our independence of thinking and action are accepted the world over. There is no doubt about it, whatever some people here may say and whatever some people abroad may like to propagate.

A most peculiar point was made by someone saying that although there is the fear–we have never named any country and we just do not know from where a threat may come—it was said : Why are we having trade talks with Pakistan?' This seems to be a most peculiar thinking...

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We always believe that we must try to be friends with every country and at the same time, we must be prepared for any threat of aggression...

Our policy is to continue friendship with all. Infiltration and subversion still continue on our border and we cannot take chances. The only purpose of the emergency is to guard the country's security. It is preposterous to suggest that we are gaining benefit from it or

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* Replying to Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu's remark, "So far as you know".

that legitimate political activity of the Opposition is curbed. The House is aware of the desperate attempt made by a small section of misguided elements in Nagland to seek foreign assistance and to bring foreign arms and foreign intervention in our internal affairs. No Government can disown its obligation and responsibility under the Constitution to uphold the integrity of the country and to provide security to law abiding citizens of Nagaland to maintian peace. We know that the security forces in Nagaland as well as Mizoram are facing an extremely difficult task. They have secured the cooperation of large sections of people—patriotic citizens—in Nagaland and also in Mizoram.

There is a strange talk of semi-fascist terror in Bengal. I think, Shri Das Munsi has dealt with the question. But I can say that there is no terror in West Bengal today, either semi or quarter. But there was a reign of terror in Bengal when the CPM was in power. Women were afraid to move about. Women and youth brought down their rule.

There was also talk of the suppression of tribals and Harijans. No party or no Government has tried its utmost as ours to see that a better deal is given to these people. I know that what has been done is not adequate. I am fully aware of the incidents involving loss of their property which we greatly deplore. Some of this is due to the increasing economic tension as well as social obscurantism and certain prejudices. We must all together fight to eliminate this evil from our society. There is greater need for official alertness but it is not true to say that there is unabated repression by the Government. Sometimes officials at lower levels neglect their duties or misuse their authority. But whenever this has come to our notice, we have come down strongly on them.

Sir, as I said I do not want to go into the various allegations because they have been replied to and contradicted time and again. A letter has been tried to be read out and we also have clearly spoken about it. Nothing improper has been done. But I can say that those who pretend to be asleep cannot be woken up. A person who makes false charges knowingly cannot be convinced.

Sir, I have done nothing to be afraid of, nothing to be ashamed of and nothing that has harmed the country. The people know it. They will not be misled by charges made by bitter individuals who are united only in anger and frustration.

Much that should have been done has not been achieved. We fully realise this and we feel humble that such great challenges are still to be overcome. They cannot be dealt with by Government or individuals but by a united move to eradicate all these evils, whether social or economic. Let us fight each other in elections; let us fight each other on matters on which we do not agree not by violence but by peacefully talking together, by meeting together and not by trying to exploit the situation in Parliament and outside Parliament. Let us not use the occasions in such a way as to harm the country and delay the progress of the country.

Defeat the Forces of Destabilisation*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is rather difficult to know how to reply to this debate. Nothing new was said. Most of the issues have been raised earlier. Towards the end of the debate, the question concerning Shri Antulay was raised. It can be called the Antulay debate and not a no-confidence debate. Hon. Members of the Opposition were trying to find new reasons to clothe the same old thing arguments. I am not a lawyer but, I have had occasion to read something about the law—the last years compelled me to do so! I noticed that he who was defending a case that had no defence was the loudest in his arguments. This is what we have heard here.

I am not going into the question of corruption. Those who were on the Treasury Benches in the years just before are hardly the people to throw stones. It is their good fortune that we do not want to be vindictive. We do not want to labour these issues. There is hardly a person against whom his own colleagues have not brought forward serious and cogent allegations. There are hardly a few whose reputations were not the subject of talk not only in India but in far corners of the world, as for instance I was told when I went to London, in 1978. Now to pretend to be clothed in innocence neither rings true nor is it even funny.

Motions of No-Confidence are brought to discuss serious questions. What were the issues raised here ? Have they not been discussed, in the last few days, not just in passing but for hours and hours and hours ? Did the Essential Services Maintenance Bill not go on into the early hours of the next day ? You, Sir, yourself corrected Shri Stephen informing him that the debate lasted for 22 hours or something like that. Was that an issue to bring up in a No-confidence Motion almost immediately afterwards? And it is the same with the other questions. Take the Antulay issue; has it not been discussed day after day ever since it came up?

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Unemployment has been mentioned already**. Perhaps an hon. Member did speak of unemployment, saying that 'I had not solved unemployment'. With great respect may I ask if he can tell me who has solved the unemployment problem and in which country except those which are grossly under-populated and have to import labour. If we had a population of only six million or so, we would certainly not have unemployment. But who

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion of No-Confidence in the Council of Ministers, *L.S. Deb.*, 17 September, 1981, cc. 471-95.

** Replying to the remark of a Member : "What about unemployment ?"

is not aware of our population problem ? As my friend, Mohsina Kidwai, pointed out, when we were trying to convince people of the importance of the population problem and promoting programmes, the Opposition went all out to jettison the project.

Two or three people seem to have coordinated their policy to say that we have given up our old policy and that we do not have the will. Sir, there is a party there—I am not taking the name because they will only make a noise and I know everybody is tired and wants to go home.

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But there are parties who have made it their main strategy to spread falsehood. What nonsense was not spread about the Family Planning programme? How many people did they unearth who were forcibly sterilised? How many of them had to be helped ? You had said that you would give Rs. 5,000 or Rs. 10,000 ? How many people came forward ? Nothing was heard about it afterwards when your Government came in power. This is only one instance.

What did the then Government do to our industry ? Some eloquent words were spoken about our not having faith in industrial labour and industrial labour not having faith in us. What happened during the Janata Party period ? Did they have faith in them ? Why then did they vote for us if they had faith in them ? And how many times—I should like to ask my hon. friend who initiated the debate, he said he had participated in no-confidence debates against the Janata Party—I have looked up the records. I am sorry to say that I did not find any evidence of this. I have looked up two instances of such motions in 1978. You may not have spoken for the Janata Party but you did not support the No-confidence motion. In fact....

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I could not come across it. If you have done so then I accept your word. But I was shown the records a short while ago...

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This is something which can be easily checked. As I said, I have only looked at the records sitting here now. I do not know what happened before. But from what I read, it seems very clearly to me that the no-confidence motion was not supported. To the world outside and to the people of India it seemed as if both the communist parties, broadly speaking—they may or may not have voted, that is immaterial—sometimes they did speak against the Janata Party but broadly speaking in every important issue—they supported their policies...(*Interruptions*). No, no, I do not accept it.

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As today they are also siding with the rightist elements; *you were siding with them then, you are siding with them now, and you are doing everything possible to weaken our

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* Responding to Shri Ramavatar Shastri's remark, "CPI never supported the Janata Party..."

effort, knowing that your feeble movements will strengthen the rightists. You may not want to be rightist; I am not concerned with whether you do or do not. But your actions brought in the Rightists before and today you are strengthening them. And I might tell you what an hon. Member has told me. I asked : Do you think that bringing in the Rightists is going to help the country ? He said : "No. It will disrupt the country; it will destroy the country. But they won't be able to touch us!"

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I am not mentioning any names. (*Interruptions*) But I am not interested in what you think about me. All of you have poured the worst venom, not only on me now, but on my father whilst he was alive. Don't think that I have forgotten all that nor have I forgotten what anybody said. Don't tell me now what you said then, and what you have been saying since, and what you are saying now. I have read it. I have ears to hear and eyes to see and if some of you don't know your own history I am sorry. I was with my father. I know what he had to go through. (*Interruptions*) Don't make me go into that history because you will be sorry for it. Once before I said it and then you went on and on criticising me for going into such matters. He was called a stooge of the British. He was told by the Communist Party, a stooge of the British. (*Interruptions*). It is no use shaking your head. If you don't know, keep quiet. I am not distorting facts. I am not used to distorting them. I have never in my life distorted anything knowingly. I may make a mistake if I don't know but this is something I do know, because I was very close to the scene of action. (*Interruptions*) I am not bothered about what you think of me. We have had enough experience of these groupings, people hopping from party to party for a long time, not just in 1977. It has happened in different States. But in 1977, not only the Indian people, but the people of the world had the opportunity to see how devoted the various parties were to their names, to their ideologies and to their policies. Everything was swept aside by just one desire : 'Let us throw Indira Gandhi out. Let us somehow get hold of the chair of power.' Our party alone stood up against all the attacks, all the venom, all the hardship. We kept to our name, our ideals and our programmes (*Interruptions*).

We have been wedded to certain basic policies. We have not changed those. If we consider those policies irrelevant to the new India we may have to change something but I don't think that is ever going to happen. Because, they are the basic guidelines which are relevant to the Indian condition, the Indian situation and Indian circumstances. But, as we go along, we do have to take some new steps. If something is torn, you have to repair it. And this is what we have to do now. It is not some little thing that was torn. The entire structure was dislocated, the Railways, the Industry and other programmes. They were all totally dislocated. I did not want to repeat all these things but one just has to have the correct picture. I have been taunted that I promised a Government that works. Do you imagine that if we were not working, we could have made such progress in coal and the other items. I have the figures here, I can read them. Those who discredited India's name abroad, when they see that India once more counts, are the ones to tell us that our foreign policy is wrong. (*Interruptions*)

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When people sleep, you can wake them up. You can try to tell them. But when they deliberately shut their eyes, then it is not possible to convince them, of anything. Whether it be in the economic field, foreign policy or the overall domestic scene, Government has been acting with clarity, decisiveness and vigour. The world knows that today in India there is a Government, not a collection of disparate groups, some moving from party to party and ultimately landing themselves where they are...(*Interruptions*).

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In 1980, we inherited an economy which was heading towards total collapse. The decline in our G.N.P. in 1979-80 was 4.5 per cent and the percentage rise in the wholesale price was 23 per cent. Today, according to the impartial assessment of the World Bank our GNP has registered a growth rate of 7 to 8 per cent. The increase in the wholesale price index over the year has come down from 23 per cent in January 1980 to 15 per cent in January 1981 and to less than 9 per cent today. I entirely agree that unless this has an effect on the prices in the market there is not much use quoting figures to an ordinary man in the street. But this is the first step. Unless the wholesale prices come down you cannot bring the others down. The Janata Party did not even bring the rate of growth of inflation down, the rate of growth of inflation was going up during the Janata Party Government regime. At least this is one item that we have curbed.

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As I said, when prices were sky-rocketing then, I heard no voice of criticism from the other side. Only towards the end when the Janata Party was cracking did some people pick up the courage to speak and of course when the Party broke, they loudly spoke one against the other. But before that nobody mentioned these matters, although prices had started increasing soon after they came to power.

There has been persistent misrepresentation about inflation in India. Nobody with any sense of responsibility can claim that there could be a zero rate of growth in inflation in present day world conditions. The average world rate of inflation—these figures have been quoted but I am going to repeat them—was 15 per cent during 1980. The average for Latin America was 56.6 per cent; for West Asia it was 57.6 per cent ; for Africa 17.6 per cent. Even for industrialised countries the average rate of inflation has been around 11.3. If we have been able to contain the rate of inflation in India by a series of prudent steps to less than 9 per cent, certainly it is an achievement for which we can take credit.

Now take our economic infrastructure. In 1980, we inherited an infrastructure, which was in shambles. We have now brought the key sectors—power, coal and railways—back to work. (*Interruptions*) who did accident, sabotage ?

When you take back people to work who had earlier committed sabotage, who had been dismissed for good reasons, do you expect that service to work properly ?

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No.* In everything you had good movement in the beginning. That was the momentum which we had left; just as we have had difficulty in picking it up because of the slide black after you left. If the country had not we would have gone much faster.

In the Railways the Budget for the current financial year envisages a loading of 20 million tonnes more than last year *i.e.* 215 million tonnes against 195 million tonnes. Out of the additional 10 million tonnes, nearly 12.5 million tonnes of additional traffic has already been loaded in the first five months of the current financial year. Therefore, we are confident that we will exceed the Budget estimates of 215 million tonnes and make it a year of the highest revenue originating loading ever achieved in Indian Railways.

Now with regard to coal, it has registered an increase of 9 per cent over the same period last year.

About railways, I think I did not give this figure before, the railways moved 15 per cent more freight during the first quarter of this year compared with the same period of last year; and power generation increased by 17 per cent compared with the same period last year.

It is for the people to decide whether the Government is working or not.

Now, take industrial production. We have brought the key industrial sectors from a stage of stupor to a dynamic growth track as will be evident from the fact about production. In the first quarter of the current year, there was 26 per cent increase in the production of saleable steel, 46 per cent in fertiliser and 20 per cent in cement. From a level of minus 1.4 per cent growth rate in 1979-80, the growth rate for industrial sector today is 11.1 per cent plus. In the face of these facts, again it is for the people to decide.

We are tightening up the public sector. Its professional management is being improved. We have placed the highest stress on maximizing internal production of oil. As you know, the Petroleum Minister has just announced that we have succeeded in cutting down our oil imports by Rs. 1,000 crores. This is not an ordinary achievement.

Many people have referred to the fact that less man-days have been lost this year; that is also an achievement. That is not a bad thing. Still, we had to have the Essential Services (Maintenance) Bill, not because, as somebody has tried to incite the workers by saying that we don't have faith in them. (*Interruptions*) Well, may be that in your view. I am giving my view. An attempt—very deliberate, soft spoken attempt was made. The intention was to provoke certain people—to provoke workers into feeling that we are not interested in them, farmers into feeling that we are not interested in them, and also the Sikh community—which has so bravely fought for India's freedom; on them rests much of the burden of industry as well as agriculture, nor do we have any doubts whatever about their loyalty or their efficiency. We have no doubt whatever about the patriotism of our workers.

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* Replying to Prof. Madhu Dandavate's observations, "When those who were dismissed even in 1974 strike were taken back; in the first year I projected a surplus of Rs. 65 crore; and it had gone to Rs. 124 crores. Please go through that."

I do agree that in times of crisis, they have stood by us. Then what are we afraid of? We are afraid that there are enough people wanting to mislead them for political purposes—not for any gain to the workers themselves. And that is what I am trying to answer, if you will listen patiently.

During the recent strike in Defence Production installations we not only fell back in our production at a time when we desperately needed to increase production, but we lost Rs. 137 crores. This is the problem. The man-days lost may have been fewer in other areas, but in certain key areas, there was a situation which could cause great harm should any other type of crisis develop—the man-days lost in Defence production were 36.20 lakhs—knowing how important defence works are for our country.

Indian Airlines, in the year 1980-81 made a profit of Rs. 248 crores. Air India not only covered up their losses, but during the first three months of 1981-82 made a profit of Rs. 1.98 crores.

Even in agriculture, in spite of many uncertainties of the monsoon, we hope to have a comfortable year. It is as an insurance against uncertainties of rain that we decided it was better to import grain at a time when it was easily available, rather than later being held to ransom by unscrupulous people.

It was interesting to see that having found no other valid point, several Members of the Opposition spoke of the rain showers to reinforce their arguments. I should like to know how many of you have been able to attract rain in any place where you have gone ?

The public distribution system which had been completely disrupted, has been enlarged and improved; but I shall be the first to admit that it is by no means satisfactory and until it is strengthened and made more effective, neither our programmes nor goods will be able to reach every section of the people as they should. That is why all our efforts are towards this end.

Our emphasis had been on improving the infrastructure because we felt that, that was basic for any other programme. It is not true to say that we are not concerned about unemployment; we are; but you cannot remove unemployment by wishing it away. We have concentrated on what we consider to be the basis and the foundation which is the infrastructure. That has improved and it is improving and it will improve. If all things go well and with the efforts that we are putting in, once the infrastructure is stabilised, as it is being done, it will be a sort of jumping of ground for many other programmes. It is only when you increase production that you can provide greater employment in industries. Each activity is linked; industry is linked with agriculture and agriculture is linked with industrial production.

Several people had spoken about our loan from the IMF. They also raised this point earlier with the Finance Minister. I was rather surprised to hear some of the arguments used and long quotations from the Birla Institute. No country today can keep away from inter-dependence. Our point is not that there should not be inter-dependence, but that inter-dependence must rest on independence. This is the message which India is taking all over the world and which we are trying to implement here in our country. But when we found the economy in the state that it was, it was absolutely necessary that, with the huge

budgetary deficit which we never had before—it was the gift of the Janata Party—we should find funds. Either we do nothing or if we want to go ahead with our big plan, we must raise the resources. And as the Finance Minister had assured the House, I would also like to add my voice to say that there is no question whatsoever of giving in to any condition which can be against our declared policy, accepted by Parliament or against our national interest; there is absolutely no question. (*Interruptions*). This we have definitely told to the Monetary Fund and to all else who have approached us on this matter. Because we feel that now conditions for development are favourable if only we can get this initial help that we have gone in for a big plan and for the IMF loan.

Of the insinuations, some are ideological but most are ill-informed and irrelevant. This is not the first time that we have borrowed from abroad, but at no time was our economy intrinsically stronger or our own negotiating position better than it is now.

Every country in the world knows that my Government is not one that can be pressurised or pushed round politically, economically and militarily. So far as the domestic scene is concerned, no one can accuse me of complacency. We are not at all complacent. We see the dangers of the situation and we have not lowered our guard. Weaknesses and dangers do abound and we must fight them, but, at the same time, we must not belittle our own strength. The danger of communalism is persistent and so long there are extremists and fanatics, whether they are Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians or any other, we simply cannot rest; we must try and change the atmosphere in the country. This is not merely a question of law and order or of punishing people; what was needed is an atmosphere of brotherhood. Tolerance has to spread. There is now a new phenomenon to which my attention was drawn in Bihar Sharief. The people felt that the trouble there was politically motivated. Those who met me, were not my party people. I had gone at hardly a moments notice and people from all sections were there. They were doing different work, picking up dead bodies or whatever; and this was their spontaneous comment to me. (*Interruptions*).

†Now please keep quiet; enough has been done.

The Jamshedpur Inquiry report clearly brings out the kind of evil doers that are at work; and you know that it is partly because I have fought against it all my life, not from today but even before independence. During the independence struggle and afterwards much of this attack and venom has been poured upon me by them and others. This, to me is the Jan Sangh. You can change the name a million times, but it will remain. Jan Sangh. Nothing can be more insulting to our great leader Mahatma Gandhi than to say that the Jan Sangh is adopting his ideology. Nothing can be more insulting to him or to India for that matter. Do they take us for fools? People have only to read the speeches of their earlier leaders of the RSS like Golwalkar, what did they speak about Mahatma Gandhi and Mahatma Gandhi's ideas and policies.

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† Translated from Hindi.

I talk with deep conviction and with very deep anguish. It is not a nice thing for me to say this that, anybody, in this country should hold such views about a person like Mahatma Gandhi. (*Interruptions*)

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They think that we are the only people who should be tolerant and should listen to all kinds of abuse, character assassination and so on. They can't listen to even one word. Talking about character assassination—I forget who it was, an hon. Member opposite Shri Dandavate, I think, who said that he is not interested, that he was least interested in character assassination. But he sat very quiet while it was being indulged in by all of you opposite during those years.

I do not want to go into the cases against me. But one case I do want to mention. I wonder whether you know about it. I had to go all the way to Imphal, Manipur on a non-bailable warrant. Do you know what the charge was ?—I was supposed to be an abettor to a person who had stolen two chickens and six eggs? This was the high esteem in which the Janata Party held character and democracy. And the person in charge was the Judge, he was the Prosecutor, he was the persecutor, he was the Government Advocate-General of Manipur and the Chairman of the Commission as well!

Now, I have no hesitation in saying that the communalists are worse than almost any other threat we have and also casteism. Both are two sides of the same coin and this is the most reprehensible of all anti-national elements. We can easily meet external threats. But communalists, as I have said many times, are like white ants who eat up the wood or the grain from within. And the RSS is not alone in this. It has good company, or bad company in communalists of different hues and denomination. I don't say there are communalists in only one religion; they are there in all religions and anybody who is fanatical in that way, feeds the fires of fanaticism in the other extremists' group. Therefore, we have to be warned against them all equally.

Ever since the present Government assumed office, it has accorded high priority to the maintenance of law and order, which is essential to ensure an orderly life to the community. We have addressed ourselves with earnestness to this primary task and as a result of concerted efforts, the situation has shown improvement in spite of attempts by certain elements, by certain political parties, to organise, agitations on every conceivable issue or non-issue. In the past few months, there has been a perceptible fall in the incidence of violence, murders and intimidation. Of course, crime has not stopped. There are incidents of organised thefts and robbery in certain areas. But I think we can say that as a whole the law and order machinery has been successful in curbing the activities of anti-social elements. (*Interruptions*). When the Janata Party came in, these people also—the anti-social elements, smugglers and all were released. It is not we who released them. It is the Janata Party who released them. Some of these anti-social elements were actually honoured at receptions and garlanded; pictures appeared in the newspapers. Now to suddenly say, when they have been let loose that we capture them all, is not realistic. Somebody mentioned Galadhar's name. It might interest the hon. Member to know that it was in 1977 that these people were removed from the list of suspects.

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Offences against women are really a shame on all of us. I am told that they are showing a decrease and that the law and machinery is vigilant. But of course they still are occurring unfortunately. With the amendment of the Criminal Procedure Code, IPC and the Evidence Act, it is hoped that these will be under further control. This is an area in which public opinion is very important and the opinion of the neighbours.

Our friends opposite get very excited. They can talk about any State they like, but if we mentioned West Bengal or Kerala, all of them get up. I am not going to say anything more except, can you honestly say that the law and order situation in Kerala is all right? Our people are being killed, but so many as people of other parties.

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I am glad that you have such deep knowledge, but fortunately or unfortunately, not all of it is correct. *Just because your leaders repeat something in public, it does become true. But no one can deny, whether it is a foreigner or an Indian, who has been to Kerala, the large number of political murders. Never in any part of India have so many political murders taken place, not on this scale. (*Interruptions*).

There is no truth in the allegation that I want to topple Governments. Either it is a guilty feeling or they want to have it! I do not want to topple any Government and my going to the States has been welcomed by the Chief Ministers, where I have so far been, because it enables us to get a better understanding of the blocs or obstacles in the implementation of various accepted programmes, specially programmes which have to do with our plan. I go with central officials or they go earlier and sometimes stay on later, and then follow up these matters and try and help the States in whatever way they can.

There seems to be a lot of rhetoric on moral values and code of ethics. And the question asked was whether my name was used in Shri Antulay's Trust. I saw no reason for being in the House when it was addressed to the Finance Minister. When a question was asked to me in Bhubneswar, I did not hesitate, I answered it at once. Had they followed up with other questions, I would have answered those questions. I have answered all questions. When Mr. Antulay told me about this Trust—Shri Kaushal has read out its objects—I thought they were good objects. And I agreed that it was a good idea to help artists. When I was Minister for Information in 1965, many artists came to me with some such demand. So, when Shri Antulay told me that the Trust was going to help young artists, I thought it a good idea. In that sense I did give my blessings. When he asked for my name, I advised him not to use it not because the objective was bad or the Trust was bad but because I do not like to give permission for my name whether it is a Trust, hospital or any other institution. There are many such requests by Chief Ministers and other people .....

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* Responding to Shri M.M. Lawrence's remark, "From 1959 onwards we know what happened."

I have a single-minded purpose in life and I shall proceed towards it. And until my last breath I will be going towards it regardless of what others may say. I am not interested whether we have this Government or that Government or who is in the chair. I kept working when I was out of power. I kept working when every attempt was made to finish me off. I did not deviate from my goal. I am not interested in whether I lose or gain. And those of us in the Congress Party who have gone through the crucible of Gandhian discipline are in no need of lectures on ethics and codes of conduct from the self-professed neoconverts to Gandhian principles. I am almost tempted to quote a biblical saying 'Physician, heal thyself'. However, I do wish the House and the nation to know that my Government and my party will stand for the highest principles of conduct in public life and ensure that those principles and rectitude are not only followed by all those who are privileged to exercise power but also ensure that they seem to be followed (*Interruptions*). In Garhwal I have seen with my own eyes who has been beating up whom, who has been bashing up whose cars. As I have said earlier, my own staff was threatened.

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I have been bashed up by your people a number of times. Who the people were, I do not know. But there were attacks on me during those three years, attacks on my life in different parts of India (*Interruptions*). We have not indulged in such attacks (*Interruptions*).

Now, unfortunately, provincialism was also given a push. And now there is an attempt to stir up Centre-State antagonism. We have an extra-ordinary situation in which a State Government says, we do not accept the plan but we will take its help.

My visits to the States have been deliberately misinterpreted. Their purpose as I said was simply to bring about better understanding and coordination in regard to development programmes that involve the Central and State Governments. They are not inspection tours. We were not there to see how the State is doing its work. They were problem–solving visits and in a number of places the problems were solved and the situation improved almost immediately. It certainly would be a sad day if the Prime Minister of India cannot take interest in the development programmes all over the country.

The danger to peace comes not only from casteism and communalism but also from frustrated people and elements who somehow want to create trouble and give Government a bad name. As I said earlier, those who throw stones should not be surprised if some stones are thrown at them. Parties whose record while in office and conduct before, after or during, has been far from commendable are now trying to pick holes in our work. I do not say all of us are angels. No party consists only of angels. We have consistently tried, where we found wrong-doing, to correct it. I can certainly say that our party is in a far better shape as a party than any of those, (*Interruptions*)... but that is your problem, not mine.

So far as foreign policy is concerned, this is a time of exceptional difficulty, and I am sorry that you were not interested enough to have the debate on foreign policy today. It just shows that you are not interested enough.

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Tomorrow it may or may not come*. Nobody knows what you will rake up before this.

Shri Vajpayee and some of his friends are very fond of saying that I am trying to rake up the foreign issue in order to hide some thing here. I have never wanted to hide anything. The advice my father gave me in my very early childhood was that everything should be open, and that is how I have always lived. Therefore, when I see a situation, I speak up about it, and that is why we sometimes get into trouble, because there are lots of people who do not like our type of frank speaking.

There is no doubt that dangers have increased. This is acknowledged, by leaders all over the world. It is even more so in our immediate neighbourhood, though no fault of ours, but nevertheless the danger is there, and we have to prepare ourselves.

You have probably seen this very morning the newspapers have reported that a final decision has been taken to accelerate the supply of F-16 to our neighbour. As I said before, it is not a question of whether a particular country should have more or less, but it is the whole attitude behind this and the tension which it is bound to cause, which it has already caused, by upsetting the balance which enjoins on us to be very careful and to see that the tranquility of our area, which is disturbed, should be somehow restored.

Justifying the acquisition of sophisticated equipment which as I have earlier pointed out is a generation ahead of what we have, our neighbour has made unjustified charges of arms build-up by us. In the same statement they have also mentioned the Simla Agreement. We have been acting in the Simla spirit and we would welcome a similar policy on the part of Pakistan. But their actions do not seem to correspond to the concept of peaceful, bilateral discussion and eschewal of thoughts or policies of military solutions, nor do we think that the sophisticated weaponry which they are acquiring is compatible with the Simla spirit. Also, they lose no occasion to rake up bilateral matters. It was one of the first conditions of the Simla Agreement that such matters should be left for us to talk between ourselves. This is not the occasion to go deeper into a review of the foreign scene. I have referred to it because Parliament will adjourn very shortly and I thought I should put my anxiety before you.

We all know the extreme seriousness and the delicacy of the international situation. I do not know whether the Opposition does not realise it, or whether it just thinks that making trouble is more important—I am not talking about the House, I am talking of what often happens outside. By all this you do not weaken the Government if that is what you hope to do. But you do try to create an atmosphere of frustration, of despair. This is the most weakening thing that can happen to any community or any boundary. If we take away hope from man—at no time have I said that I personally have been able to get better production. In every single speech I have emphasised that it is the farmers of India, who were willing to adopt new ideas, adopt new methods, were able to increase their production and to make us self-reliant. It is the industrial worker of India who has helped by his sweat

* Replying to a Member's remark, "Tomorrow we will have it."

and labour to increase our production and to help us to diversify our industry. At no time have we said that we have done this. But we have helped them with our policy, we have helped them by giving direction and above all we have helped by giving them hope. This is what you are trying to take away from them. This is where we all quarrel and there are bound to be quarrels, whether it is democracy or even if it is not a democratic system, wherever there are human beings there are quarrels and differences. But there are occasions when on some issues we should try and stand as one. Of course, in war time everybody says, 'We are with you, and so on', but in peace time also we have to see that hope is maintained, the people should never feel that this country has no future. It has got a bright future, and we shall go towards it step by step. By talking in anger, in envy or in desperation some Opposition spokesmen are only giving comfort to the opponents of the country who go away to report in their papers and in other ways that India is falling to pieces. But I know that the greater part of the House and the country will stay solidly with us.

Now, one small point I want to make, which is on leadership. I am quite distressed that my side keeps on raising this issue of Kshetriya Gramin Bank, Kanpur. People raise it only because we are taunted by the other side. When they see that their leader is under attack, they all feel that they must rush to rescue her, but they should know very well by now that I am fully capable of looking after myself.

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What I am trying to say is that although in the Congress Party there has always been a recognised leader, this does not mean that the party collapses without that leader. When one leader has gone, another has always come to take his place in a peaceful domocratic manner. Whether the leader is strong or not is important, but what is more important is that the party should be solid in spite of our quarrels. We do not have the strict discipline which some parties have, whether it is on this side or on that side. We allow our people to talk. That is our weakness, it is also our strength. But our party will remain strong, Indira Gandhi or no Indira Gandhi. The Congress Party is a party which is giving the programmes and policies, the implementation of which will lead this country forward. We do not think that we can solve all problems; nobody has solved them in one or two generations. All we can hope is to take the country forward in the right direction and to see that it is in good hands who can take it further ahead.

So, I appeal to all the hon. Members here to defeat this Motion of No-confidence, bearing in mind the critical days ahead on all fronts and to rise to occasion to preserve our democracy, our secularism, our national unity and to scrupulously guard against falling a prey to the forces of destabilisation within or without.

Our Basic Objective – Self-Reliance*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, many people from our side have rightly said that this question of bringing a no-confidence motion has become a routine matter, but they have failed to follow it up by saying that every time it is we who come up on top, not because of numbers but because of the effectiveness of the replies given to the points made by the Opposition. No new point has been raised in today's debate that has not been discussed in this very Session and which has not been replied to during question hour and on other occasions time and again. Therefore, what was the point of raising them all over again. That point was answered by the last speaker from the Opposition Benches. It is personal animosity. He brought personal animosity into the debate, he tried to bring my family into it, even my small grand-children. Is this Parliamentary democracy? (*Interruptions*) Does it show decency? This was his major and most-loudly-made point. This shows what his interest lies in. Earlier and before that, as my hon. colleague, Mr. Venkataraman aptly pointed out, when very serious matters were being debated in the House, the hon. Opposition leaders and Members did not consider it worth their while, did not consider those matter important enough for them to be present in the House, and now suddenly they see them as important enough to censure the Government on. We can withstand their censure, we have faced their censure, we have stood the censure of the world on many important matters. We have stood as I said in America and everywhere I have gone and as I shall continue to state, we have stood upright in spite of our opponents or what Opposition Members say. It would have been more appropriate if the hon. Members had moved a vote of no-confidence in themselves. (*Interruptions*) For once at least they would have got the credit of recognising the realities of the situation.

I do not think that the facts of their criticism about one another are hidden from us on this side or the opposite side or from the world at large. The last Member who spoke belongs to the real, *asli* Lok Dal, the others are *nakali* ones; and yet here they have got together! Those who have been the very perpetrators of such emotions accuse us of casteism and communalism, not just from today but since before independence. Then there are those who consider themselves progressive. What are they doing? They are very proudly saying, "We do not associate ourselves with such people". What are you doing on this occasion? What have you done in the elections, I ask you? You have not stood alone. You have supported reactionary elements outside and inside the House on every possible occasion. (*Interruptions*).

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion of No-Confidence in the Council of Ministers, *L.S. Deb.*, 16 August, 1982, cc. 206–21.

A respected and a known Marxist leader has said, we shall support the BJP, "We shall accept the support of the BJP, if this defeats Indira Gandhi". This was printed in all the newspapers. (*Interruptions*). Do not make a noise here.

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You have their version here also.* Therefore, they consider the BJP and the RSS as good allies. It is not only I who am saying this. Your member himself has just admitted it—the CPM member..... (*Interruptions*) I am not yielding to you. Please sit down.

They are slinging mud against one another. The various groups, the BJP, the various segments of the LDs, the CPI-M, and the DSP, all these have throughout been indulging in mudslinging. This does not prevent them from joining hands to try to weaken the Government—not that they can replace it. They have no positive programme. They have no positive policy. What is the use of speaking of ideology? If one Opposition party has a programme, the other has a diametrically opposed one and the third person goes in yet another direction. That is not called a programme. It just means destruction of the solidarity of our people. It means the destruction of the unity of our country. That is what you are out to do. You may refute it until you are blue in the face, but you cannot convince anybody. This fact the world has recognised. I happen to be in touch with world leaders, with the leaders of the countries which some Members opposite support and the countries which the rest of them support. I happen to know what they think of India..... (*Interruptions*)

Today every country in the world is impressed by our basic policies and the manner in which we are implementing them. Every country, I repeat, from the developing world, the developed world, the Communist world and the capitalist world. There must be something good in what we are doing, that such very diverse elements have come to praise us, personally by talking or writing to me...

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Why have they not done it to you**? Why have they not done it to other people? You have only to hear what was said in the non-aligned movement during the Janta Party or Lok Dal Government.

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You have now the temerity to suggest and alleged that we are compromising ourselves on self-reliance. You have the temerity to say this to Indira Gandhi?.... when I have stood for the honour of the country—(*Interruptions*) yes, what is the use of saying 'Oh?'—Yes, I am..... (*Interruptions*)

I am destroying it?*** .....(*Interruptions*) The world knows when India's strength has been built, the world knows when India's honour has been upheld. It is not a question

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* Replying to Shri Satyasadhan Chakraborty's remark, "It was against authoritarianism and we shall fight it."

** Asking Prof. Madhu Dandavate who said, "Diplomacy demands it."

*** Responding to Shri Harikesh Bahadur's remark, "You are destroying".

of shouting in this House, whether our side does it or your side does it. The world knows it and the world has acknowledged it. The fact is that they have acknowledged some Members who accuse me, are those who have strongly opposed the policies of the Congress and of Jawaharlal Nehru to build up our own economic strength, to have economic planning and to improve our industry and agriculture.

There are many who have constantly propagated that it is better for us to belong to one bloc or another. Today they seem to have changed. I am sorry to say I find it most difficult to believe in them when I know how long they have held other views.

Self-reliance has been, is and will always remain our basic objective. Especially this month of August brings back heroic memories of the Quit India Movement. There were some even then who did not want the country to stand for Independence but were serving the cause of the colonial masters. There are some who are sitting opposite who even when we became independent, said that we were stooges of the British. Don't make me repeat all this because it is all down in black and white.

Today, our technology has gained immense strength. For its own good, we have to go in for more advanced technology in some fields. Otherwise, we shall be struck with obsolete methods in a world that is fast changing and fast moving. We are not throwing open our entire economy to the foreign investment but only those segments which will increase our expertise and bring the sophisticated knowhow of which we are in need.

A great deal has been said about Tarapur. Now, I think an adequate reply was given. However, I should like to clarify once more that during the discussion with the U.S. Delegation in India and in U.S.A. between our officials, we made our position amply clear and also in other forums regarding—(a) the right to reprocess without further consultation and (b) on the expiry of the agreement, and all rights and obligations arising out of this in 1993. Both sides agreed that, in spite of the differences of opinion on these two issues, arrangements for continued supply of enriched uranium to India within the framework of the 1963 Agreement could be made and, therefore it was decided to accept the offer of supplies through France. Because, earlier there was uncertainty in the supply of fuel by the U.S.A., we had to think of some alternative method. Development work was carried out and the use of MOX as an alternative fuel was found feasible. The work on this technological achievement will be continued. I have stated this in this House on an earlier occasion also. I could read a much longer note but I do not want to take the time of the House. But, I repeat that the use of MOX in the future for the Tarapur Atomic Power Station is not precluded.

Sir, much has been said about the Bihar Press Bill. I am not going into the matter except to reiterate that we stand committed to a free Press. But, as the Press Commission has observed, the Press has to be not only free but responsible—responsible not to the Governments but to the consequences of whatever they write or publish. As has been said, in fact, somebody has sent me a quotation, "nobody is entitled to use his freedom of speech and expression to injure another's reputation" (*Interruptions*) I have no doubt that the senior professionals in the Press itself will not approve of the untruth or obscenity that are

sometimes indulged in by the less responsible sections of the Press. How should this be dealt with is a matter which can be discussed and which can be gone into. But, as has been pointed out, this is not a new idea. A very similar act was passed earlier by two States. So far as I remember, I did not hear much noise about it, either here or outside, from those who were in power then.

Sir, a lot of people have made much about the elections. I have not got all the figures about the last elections. But, I can say that in Haryana, in 1997, we had 17.15 per cent of the votes; in the Lok Sabha elections in 1980, we had 35 per cent and, in the Assembly Elections in 1982, we had 38 per cent.

If the weaker sections which are the vast majority of the population did not support us, how is it that we were able to get such a majority? Was it by the support of the big houses that we are two-thirds of us here? (*Interruptions*) Such a remark, Sir, is an insult not to me or to any of us, but it is an insult to the electorate of India and the many millions of people who voted.

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Our differences with him* are of long standing; they are basic. I do not want to bring them out in the open. But one of the questions which he used to raise with me during my earlier regime, when I was Prime Minister and he the Chief Minister of UP, was that we should close down the mills, specially the textile mills. It is for the House to consider whether that policy is viable in any modern country. I myself put the question to him : "What are we going to do with all the industrial workers, who will be dislodged"? He said, "you will have to get them to make handloom material." Hon'ble Members can also consider if that is a possibility? Will that supply enough cloth at reasonable prices and in time to the huge population of India? I am mentioning only one item to show the trend of Chaudhuri Sahib's thinking on many such matters.

He also gave certain statistics. I do not blame him for using them very selectively, meant only to serve his own thesis. He said nothing at all about the overall increase in grain output, increase in sugar and milk products. I can give figures of the record food production; in 1981-82, it was 132 million tonnes, oilseeds in 1981-82—115 lakh tonnes; sugarcane 180 million tonnes, milk production—33 million tonnes as against 17 million tonnes in 1951. I could have given many other statistics. I am cutting short the list. There are other items with which the smaller man is concerned, that is the production of eggs, fish etc. In all these production has augmented tremendously. And obviously, the gain will go to private persons, these are not State ventures; but of small farmers and sometimes even the landless people.

There was also talk about poverty line. I should like to make clear that I have never said that we have conquered poverty or eliminated poverty. On the contrary, I have said that there is poverty, and that in my generation, we shall not be able to remove it. I have made that very clear, as long back as when I came to power in 1966. It is an enormously

* Chaudhuri Charan Singh

big problem. What I have said is that the face of poverty is changing. What I have said is, and it is true, that many millions of people have been raised above what was considered the poverty line earlier on. And that line is a shifting line. At that time what was considered luxuries by the people, are today necessities, we do not blame them; we agree with them.

At the same time, the question of population increase must also be taken into consideration. Life expectancy has gone up. I am sorry, I do not agree with Shri Chavan's theory although I know that the Congress itself has used the phrase. The rich are richer, I agree but the poor are not poorer. They are poorer by contrast, they are poorer because they are more conscious of poverty, but they are not poorer in the sense that I with my own eyes have seen, at the time of independence, that I with my own eyes have seen, even when I became Prime Minister in 1966. I do not live in a village; I do not know whether Chaudhuri Charan Singh himself lives in one. However, since I was a small child, villagers have been coming to my home not in hundreds, but in thousands and in lakhs. Whether in Anand Bhawan, Allahabad, in Teen Murti House, 1, Safdarjung Road or in 12, Willingdon Crescent, the house and the compound have been full of villagers from all parts of the country not always from my part, not always those who sympathise with me. Perhaps the hon. Members would be interested to know that at the time when Chaudhury Charan Singh had his Kisan Rally in Delhi a large number of farmers turned up at my house. They told me : 'We have come for the Kisan Rally' and one of the inducements given to some of them was that 'you will have Indira Gandhi's *darshan,* when you come to Delhi. (*Interruptions*).

While we are on this subject and because Shri and Shrimati Dandavate are both present, I can bring to the notice of this House an incident which took place only a few days ago. Prof. Madhu Dandavate was a Minister in the Janata Party Government, but at that time he was not bothered about the people of Belgaum or about the border issue. Now, he and Mrs. Dandavate brought quite a crowd said to be from Belgaum. What was he doing when he was a Minister for two and a half years? "We have confidence in you only. You will resolve this question". They said, not behind Prof. Dandavate's back but in front of them. He also used similar words!

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Sir, so far as the poverty line is concerned, in absolute terms the number of people below the poverty line has increased because there has been 90 per cent increase in population. However, in percentage terms the number has come down. It has declined from 51.49 per cent in 1972-73 to 48.13 per cent in 1977, and it is constantly declining. I am told that by this completion of the Sixth Five-Year Plan, we will be able to take some millions of people, over 10 crores perhaps above the poverty line.

So far as drinking water is concerned, the target under the 20-point programme is to cover all problem villages by 1985. 6,266 problem villages have been covered in the first quarter of 1982. This represents 20.2 per cent of the annual target. We hope to achieve the target by 1985.

Somebody also accused us of not dealing with this problem seriously. It is a sad commentary, but in many villages, in fact, in most villages, people seem to prefer to have a big unit or project rather than something which is so essential as drinking water or a primary school. I myself have had discussions sometimes with villagers trying to persuade them about urgent priority items, but they seem to prefer to have a prestigious project. So, we have to fight for this also.

Then there are land reforms. I don't want to go into the figures, but perhaps you know– this is as true of West Bengal as of other places–how many stay orders there are and cases that are stuck in the courts. This is true not only of land reforms, but of many other programmes which concern the poorest and the weaker sections. In this we are helpless. Unless we can all sit together and find some way, we cannot do anything.

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I do not have the full figures here of the conviction of the accused but so far as the atrocities on the Scheduled Castes are concerned,–I speak subject to correction because I am not sure whether all these towns are in Bihar, Belchi, Pipra and Bishenpur, in six places– there have been two death sentences and 135 life sentences and in other States also there have been some. I do not have all the figures with me.

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Now, with regard to employment, I have spoken on this matter earlier also. The figures that are on our registers are not always accurate. Many people who are unemployed do not register, many who are employed do register either to get a better job or to get a job in another part of the country. I have myself seen some of these figures. In spite of this, the rate of increase has declined from 16 per cent in 1978 to 13 per cent in 1979 and 1980 and has further declined to 10 per cent in 1981. By and large, about 50 per cent of the job seekers belong to the educated category. But even here, the rate of increase of unemployment has shown a downward trend. I should like to point out, as I had done before, that a lasting solution to the problem of unemployment can only depend on the level and rate of growth of the economy and that is why we lay so much stress on increasing production and on development programmes. That is the only way in which a long term solution can be found. We have got short term schemes; some of them are successful, some, I am sorry to say, are not succeeding. But the only way is really to get on with development and for hon. Members opposite not to try to obstruct us in that important task.

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The other point to which my attention has been drawn is that the proper index of our effort is the rate at which the total national income at constant prices has increased. India's GNP at constant prices has nearly trebled in the 30 years since we have started our economic planning; our domestic product grew up by an average of 3.7 per cent during the years 1970 to 1978 and this performance was better than the majority of the advanced countries even.

Sir, we believe in and are fully committed to the democratic system. However, I must confess that I have some reservations about the present functioning of Parliament. Chaudhary Charan Singh himself has spoken of the lengthening of the 'Zero Hour' and earlier I quoted my honourable colleagues, as to how little interest is shown in serious subjects and how much time goes on other subjects repeated over and over again. They may be important subjects; but when they have been replied to and you reiterate them, that does not lead to any solution. (*Interruptions*)

Mention also was made about blindings in Bhagalpur. That has been very barbarous and inhuman. I can hardly find words to describe the horror of it. But I should like to remind you that it started in the Janata Party period and it also took place in the Marxists' time in West Bengal, which by the way, was loudly denied from the opposite side when the fact was first made known. Although later it was admitted by the West Bengal Government.

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It was raised, that is why, I am speaking of it*. Otherwise, I would not have talked of the subject.

Since we were on the question of this raising of a hue and cry in the House I might say that the economic figures ragarding West Bengal which we gave were loudly protested and denied by the Marxist Party during the elections. After the elections, they admitted that they had been misled and that the figures that we had quoted were correct.

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It is refreshing but not really believeable that the Bharatiya Janata Party, the Jana Sangh, the RSS–whatever name you want to give it I consider them to be one and the same–pretend to take a different stance. With all humility I say that these are just tactics. There is no reality in this difference of opinion between the BJP and the RSS. That they have suddenly come to believe in the concept of self-reliance or of economic planning or of non-alignment, I find it very difficult to believe. What did they do? What steps did they take towards self-reliance, towards socialism when they were in power? Most of the Members opposite–I am sorry to say–become pastmasters in destructive tactics for their own ends. At that time the destruction was not against us; it was only amongst themselves; but it was destruction nevertheless.

So far as prices in Delhi are concerned, I am not going into the whole question of prices here. But I do want to take this opportunity of saying that Government is taking special measures to ensure increased supplies of essential commodities in Delhi, in the Delhi market especially during the ASIAD, so as to prevent prices going up to a significant extent.

Now, my hon. friend Shri Sathe will excuse me if I say a word about him, because several people have quoted from his speech. His own thinking has been largely, if not

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* Responding to Prof. Madhu Dandavate's comment, "Do not blind them with retrospective effect!"

entirely these days, confined to the question of colour TV. And it is true that he felt that we are not giving that issue priority he thought that it deserves. This is all that he meant by his long speech. I must confess that I am not against colour TV. The question is one of priority. My priority in radio and TV is to reach the largest number of villages possible. And we feel that we cannot do this with colour TV. We do not want to stop colour TV and we have begun it. But we feel that it is easier and cheaper to cover the country with black and white. If we can do it cheaply with colour TV, certainly we shall do so. We do not want to lag behind other countries and especially our neighbours. At this moment, this poses a serious problem. In the border areas, people like to switch on to coloured programmes from other countries rather than to see our own black and white. This is a real problem which we have all to face.

Some people have said that the 20-Point Programme is not new. We never said that it was. We have called it the revised 20-Point Programme. It was revised because some of the points have been completed and because we wanted to direct our attention and energies to the gaps and the most urgent problems which remain.

Some hon. Members feel that any time anybody mentions the name of the Soviet Union, they have to rush to its defence. I think the Soviet Union is quite capable of defending itself. It can do without help from this quarter. (*Interruptions*) I do not think that Shri Gadgil meant in any way to denigrate the Soviet Union. He was referring to the news that has appeared in newspapers in many countries that the USSR is short of grain not only for cattle but wheat for human beings also. This is not a cause for blame because, so much depends on rain. Shri Gadgil just stated a fact which he had read. To interpret it as casting aspersions on a friendly country would be wrong, and even an unfriendly act towards that country.

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Some other Members have made all kinds of insinuations. I do not wish to take the names of the hon. Members, but I can only say that it was the vilest possible insinuation to say that the Centre, or the Union Government, gives instructions for any or every Bill, or that all actions are referred to me or to anybody who is not directly concerned.

I am not concerned with what words were used in my Manipur case. But even if you say–I am not admitting it at all for I do not want to start a new argument. Even if I were merely summoned there as a witness, it is not a ridiculous charge to summon a former Prime Minister, abetting the stealing of two chickens and six eggs? That is the question which I want to ask...(*Interruptions*).

Sir, the Opposition cannot have it both ways. On the one hand, they say I am a dictator, I do not allow anybody to function, I do not allow anybody to speak; on the other hand, they say that people are doing things without asking me, things are happening in Bihar, things are happening in Delhi, without my being aware of them! You cannot have it both ways. You choose which you want and stick to that point of view...(*Interruptions*)

I should like to ask which Communist country or which Fascist country has democracy? Perhaps you would like to answer that question... (*Interruptions*) I do not know if Mr. Vajpayee will agree with that.

I charge this Opposition... (*Interruptions*) I am just finishing. I charge this Opposition with irresponsibility; I charge this Opposition with utter disregard for the norms of democracy; I charge this Opposition with wasting the time of this hon. House; I charge them wasting the money of the exchequer; I charge them with lack of concern for important legislation. Just measure the time spent on actual legislation or discussion on important issues now facing us and the world with the time spent on shouting, whether it is in 'zero hour' or on other occasions... (*Interruptions*)

In the beginning, not a voice used to be heard from our side. Only when we discovered that by keeping quiet the Opposition would not allow us to function only then our people started shouting. If the Opposition guarantees to keep quiet, I guarantee that not a word will come from our Members. Are you prepared to listen to that? Are you going to control your motley crowd there? I charge this so-called Left of the country for so completely abandoning its principles and ideals and for selling out to the right reactionaries. (*Interruptions*)

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A couple of speeches or demonstrations make no difference, nor do they form a policy. Those who are concerned with progressive policies all over the world are aware of this betrayal by the Indian left (*Interruptions*).

Sir, I should like to remind the House of the early days of Hitler in Germany, when the West was content to encourage him because he was supposed to crush communism and in that process millions of people in Germany, in Austria, in Czechoslovakia, Poland and other countries were tortured and massacred in the most barbarous manner imaginable and the entire world was engulfed in World War II. Today, the so-called Left forces in India are supporting the BJP and RSS and strengthening them in the hope, they are giving it respect in the hope... (*Interruptions*). I shall keep on repeating till you sit.

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The Left are giving the reactionaries responsibility they are strengthening them in the hope that this will weaken and, if possible, destroy the Congress, the Party which brought Independence to India, the Party which brought honour and progress, ...(*Interruptions*) the Party which is trying against tremendous odds to retain our culture and at the same time modernising the country and bringing a better life to millions of our people, specially the weaker and under-privileged sections.

Sir, I should like to ask: How many voices were raised in the Opposition when one of its Members openly and gleefully declared himself to be an agent of the CIA? How did the Opposition react when one of its Member gave information to a foreign embassy? Does this bring honour to the country? Whatever its faults, the Congress–and the Congress does

have faults because we also are human, we are not super human, we do have faults, but the Congress always has risen and always will rise to the challenge.

Hon. Members of the Opposition have brought this Motion to empty their ammunition. They have been poor marksmen and their ammunition was damp and stale. Little damage has been done except that the valuable time of the House has been spent on issues which have been discussed many times before.

I ask the hon. Member to withdraw his Motion and if he does not do so, I request you all to defeat it strongly. (*Interruptions*)

3

ECONOMIC POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND PLANS

Gold Policy*

Sir, in the last session of Parliament, the question of gold control was raised during a discussion on the Finance Bill. The Finance Minister stated that the entire question of gold control would be reviewed with reference, *inter alia,* to the various points raised by hon. Members in the course of the discussion. To undertake such a review an informal committee was set up with Shri L.P. Singh, Union Home Secretary as Chairman. Shri B.N. Adarkar, Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, and Shri Pitamber Pant, Adviser, Planning Commission, as Members, and Shri Jasjit Singh, Gold Control Administrator, as Member-Secretary. The Informal Committee has submitted an interim report. A copy of the Report is placed on the Table of the House The main conclusion reached by the Committee is that there has been no economic or financial development of any significance since Parliament enacted the Gold Control Act, 1965, such as would warrant a change in the basic gold policy.

While Government agree with this conclusion of the Committee, they recognise that a measure of socio-economic reform which is aimed at changing centuries old traditions and customs cannot be expected to become fully effective within a few years. Restrictions aimed at discouraging the consumption of gold in the country have to be introduced gradually, though progressively, and a good deal of public education has necessarily to accompany control measures which are brought into force.

With these basic considerations in mind, Government have decided to take the following action :

All the restrictions on making gold ornaments of more than 14-carat imposed under the Gold Control Order will be withdrawn. This will give relief to a large number of goldsmiths and substantially meet the criticism voiced, and suggestions made, in this House and outside. It will also give society a longer time to adjust itself to a change, which would progressively minimise the use of gold for personal purposes.

In order that this relaxation does not lead to an increase in the smuggling of gold, which according to the Informal Committee, is of a sizeable order, it will be necessary to take certain other steps in pursuit of the long term objectives of our gold policy. Government propose to prohibit the possession of "primary gold" such as gold bars, ingots, slabs, billets, shots, pellets, rods, wires. Persons holding "primary gold" legally, *i.e.,* those who

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* Making a Statement regarding relaxation of gold control, *L.S. Deb.,* 2 September, 1966, cc. 8943-45.

declared gold under the Gold Control Order, as well as those holding gold within the exempted limits, will be afforded reasonable time to dispose it of either by sale to licensed dealers or by its conversion into ornaments. This will increase the availability of gold in the market for ornament making.

Government propose to bring the refineries under State-control with the objective of eventually bringing them under State ownership.

In order to safeguard that smuggled gold is not freely converted into ornaments, declarations will need to be filed by persons possessing ornaments above a limit to be specified. This limit will be so fixed, however, as to ensure that by far the larger section of the people who possess gold ornaments in reasonable quantities will not be required to make such declarations.

Fiscal policies as well as public education will be directed towards weaning people away from the gold habit which costs us large amounts of foreign exchange at a time when we are required to mobilise all available resources to finance our development.

Government propose to give effect to these modifications as early as possible after providing for the necessary legal and administrative arrangements.*

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* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi in Rajya Sabha also, (*R.S. Deb.*, 2 September, 1966, cc 5389-92.)

Planning Commission*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, for some time past Government have had under consideration the recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Commission on the "Machinery of Planning". They also took the opportunity of the recent Conference of Chief Ministers to seek their views. Government have now finalized their decisions.

The Administrative Reforms Commission recognised the necessity of national planning for the social and economic betterment of the country and considered what would be the appropriate functions and role of the Planning Commission. They felt that the role of the Planning Commission should be mainly to formulate Plans and to evaluate Plan performance. The Commission should not be burdened with any executive functions. Government broadly agree with this approach. This approach also had the general approval of the Chief Ministers.

Government also agree with the recommendation that the Planning Commission should submit an annual report on Plan performance, and that this report should be placed before Parliament.

The general opinion at the Chief Ministers' Conference was that the Prime Minister should continue to be the Chairman of the Planning Commission. Government agree with this view.

The question of association of other Central Ministers with the Planning Commission as Members has also been examined. The general view at the Chief Ministers' Conference was that the Finance Minister should also be a Member of the Planning Commission. Government agree with this view. While other Central Ministers will not be formally associated with the Commission as its Members, it will be open to the Prime Minister to invite them from time to time to join in the deliberations of the Commission as may be necessary.

Government have decided that the Planning Commission should have the guidance of a whole-time Deputy Chairman who need not be a Member of the Council of Ministers. The Administrative Reforms Commission recommended five full-time Members including the Deputy Chairman, and two other part-time Members as may be found necessary. While Government consider that there need be no rigidity about the number of Members, they

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* Statement regarding Government decisions on the Administrative Reforms Commission's Recommendations relating to the Planning Commission, *L.S. Deb.*, 17 July, 1967 cc. 12361-63.

agree with the broad approach that the Commission should be a compact and small body of full time Members. Government are of the view that it should not be necessary to make any part-time appointments to the Commission.

Matters pertaining to specific subjects allocated to different Ministries will be dealt with in Parliament by the Ministers concerned. Financial, administrative and general questions will be dealt with by the Finance Minister or the Prime Minister as the case may be.

Government have decided that the National Development Council, of which the Prime Minister will continue to be Chairman, should be composed of all Union Cabinet Ministers, Chief Ministers of the States and the Union Territories and Members of the Planning Commission. Delhi Administration will be represented in the Council by the Lt. Governor and the Chief Executive Councillor, and the remaining Union territories by their respective Administrators.

It will be essentially for the State Governments to consider what arrangements they will make to deal with planning at the State or lower levels. These will be discussed and settled between the Central and State Governments from time to time.

Fourth Five-Year Plan*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon. Members will recall that the memorandum on the Fourth Five Year Plan, was published in October, 1964, and presented to the National Development Council. The Council then proceeded to set up five Committees to consider various aspects of the Plan, including resources. These Committees met between January and July 1965. Their efforts culminated in a document, prepared by the Planning Commission, entitled "Fourth Five Year Plan—Resources, Outlays and Programmes". This document was submitted to the National Development Council in September, 1965. Hon'ble Members will recall that this was the month of the Pakistani aggression. The National Development Council authorised the Prime Minister to make such changes in the proposals contained in the document as were considered necessary in the light of the situation which existed at that time. The Planning Commission were able to complete the Draft Outline of the Fourth Plan in September, 1966 for the consideration of Parliament. An Annual Plan for 1966-67 was also, prepared a few months earlier, keeping broadly within the framework of the Draft Outline.

It is no secret that the conflict of 1965 had many adverse economic consequences for the country. Following hostilities, foreign credits were suspended which meant curtailment and stringent control of imports essential for the continued growth of thc economy.

There was further strain in the economy because of the altogether unexpected setback to our agricultural production even during 1966-67 after the failure of the previous year, the two droughts necessitated larger imports of foodgrains and raw materials, and greatly affected our capacity to export. Compared to the previous year, there was a further lowering in our foreign receipts in 1966-67. The setback in agricultural production also caused a retardation in the important sector of industries based on agricultural raw-material and those depending on consumption demand of agriculturist. The sharp rise in the prices of foodgrains which was inevitable in the situation of very large short fall of production, tended to reduce savings, and affected our capacity to make larger investments. This in turn affected certain other branches of industry such as the engineering industry. All this resulted to considerable erosion of resources for development. On the expenditure side, the defence burden, subsidies on food and increasing dearness allowance consequent on rise in prices also depleted our resources further.

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* Statement in response to a Calling Attention regarding the reported decision of the Government to defer the Fourth Five-Year Plan by three years, *R.S. Deb.*, 6 December, 1967, cc. 2724-27.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, these were the circumstances which delayed the completion of the Fourth Five-Year Plan and it was decided that the Annual Plan for 1967-68 should also be formulated in advance of the Fourth Plan in order to aovid a pause in the developmental process. The Annual Plan for 1967-68 was completed in June, 1967 and submitted to Parliament.

At the time of the re-constitution of the Planning Commission in September, 1967, it was obvious that many of the assumptions and calculations incorporated in the Draft Outline were no longer valid and that, to a large extent, fresh exercises would have to be made before the Fourth Five-Year Plan could be completed. Meanwhile, the work of the preparation of the Annual Plan for 1968-69 had to be taken up immediately. In order that proposals of the Annual Plan for 1968-69 should be effectively incorporated in the Budgets for 1968-69, it was necessary for the Annual Plan to be ready by January, 1968 to ensure that development outlays during the year 1968-69 were properly balanced and coordinated. The reconstituted Commission, therefore, decided to concentrate on the formulation of the Annual Plan in September, 1967 and is presently engaged in this work. It is proposed to undertake the work of the Fourth Five-Year Plan in January, 1968 after the completion of the Annual Plan for 1968-69.

Thus, the Annual Plans for 1966-67 and 1967-68 have already been brought out and the latter is being implemented. Although expectations of a good harvest have given hope of improvement in the econom there are still elements of uncertainty and danger of inflationary pressures continuing unchecked. A number of corrective steps are required during 1968-69 to tighten economic discipline and to create conditions in which steady planned growth can take place in conditions of relative financial stability. The output levels in 1968-69 would be close to the target of the Third Plan and would be a reasonable base for setting out the tasks of the Fourth Plan. It is for these reasons that the years 1966-67, 1967-68 and 1968-69 are proposed to be excluded from the Fourth Plan. Such a Five Year Plan, to be operationally useful for providing guidance on the programmes and policies for the future should cover the period 1969-70 to 1973-74. The National Development Council at its meeting on 1st and 2nd December, 1967, has endorsed this.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, may I state very clearly that the Government has not given up planning, as the movers of the Calling Attention Notice have suggested. Far from it, the process of planning is being continued and vigorously pursued although the means and methods may have to be changed to take into account our changing economic situation. Indeed, even if the Fourth Five-Year Plan had been finalised before the end of 1966, the size and composition of outlays would have to take into account the exceptional features of the prevailing economic situation and there is no reason to believe that the outlays would have been any different.

I should like to emphasize that the Five Year Plans have assumed even greater urgency and importance for us. The effort is essential and must be made continuously and seriously. It is in that spirit that the Planning Commission is proceeding towards the formulation of the Fourth Five-Year Plan. With the gains of the current year's good harvest and with the economy stabilised, we should have laid the foundations for resuming the process of rapid development in the proposed next Five-Year Plan period.

Unemployment Among Engineering Graduates*

Sir, I do not wish to take the time of the House except for a minute or two because I want to thank the hon. Member Shri Mohan Dharia for having raised this very important issue in the House. Government is deeply concerned with this problem and I can understand the feelings of hon. Members.

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Mr. Vice-Chairman, as you rightly said a little while ago, the issue before us particularly calls for a co-operative approach. This is not a party matter, nor it is a debate which requires an answer. Therefore, I do not think it makes any difference as to who speaks before or after. As you yourself have mentioned, the Education Minister is going to reply to the debate. Some hon. Members requested that I might come and say just a few words and that is why I came as soon as I could.

This is a problem, as I had begun to say, which is of deep concern to the Government and to all of us, not only because of the hardship which our young engineers are facing, but because it is a waste of national talent and national energy, which we need to use at a very difficult time of our economic development. We are fully conscious of this. Now, the situation is an unfortunate one, even a tragic one. The President, in his Address, has also expressed his deep concern and disquiet at this development. What has happened is that after planning for technical man-power based on certain rates of economic growth, while the targets of expansion in the field of technical education have been reached, the capacity of the economy to absorb them has been seriously reduced, because of the special circumstances of the last few years. That is why we have had this imbalance, thus creating this special and difficult problem. I have been in personal touch through some of the institutions which I have visited, through a number of students who come to meet me from different parts of the country. Different people, including the Education Minister, have made a number of suggestions as to how this problem should be dealt with. I forwarded them to the Planning Commission, because I thought there should be one authority, who could go into the whole matter, co-ordinate the suggestions and find out what was possible to do immediately, in the light of the resources available. The Planning Commission has very kindly gone into this matter. I had suggested serious discussions with the various Ministries of the Government and on that basis, just very recently—in fact, it is only this morning—I have seen a draft of certain suggestions which they have made. Now, these suggestions

* Participating in the Short Duration Discussion under Rule 176 regarding growing unemployment among engineering graduates and diploma holders, *R.S. Deb.*, 22 March, 1968, cc. 6067, 6078–83.

and their monetary and fiscal implications have to be studied by the various Ministries, and we have asked them to deal with the matter most urgently. We hope that a decision can soon be taken on this. What I wanted to say was that we are grateful to all the Members, who have raised this discussion, and we shall certainly pay the most serious consideration to their opinions and to the constructive suggestions which they will make in the course of the discussion. We shall certainly take the House into confidence regarding the measures which we decide to adopt.

The President stressed in his Address that there could be no easy, short-term solutions. The problem can be solved only in the measure that our economy revives and the rate of industrial growth is accelerated. We need to critically re-study our man-power requirements and keep in touch with the State Governments and university authorities to determine what changes are necessary in our present policy in order to achieve higher quality as well as a more rational equation between the output of engineering personnel and the likely demand for them. I agree with the hon. Member, who spoke just now, that we must not view this problem from the point of view of the needs of the near future only and we must not do anything which would jeopardise our future needs. Whatever we do today is not going to have any immediate effect, except in those short-term steps which we can take with regard to those young engineers who are unemployed at the present moment. In order to deal with this aspect, we are having a study of the recession in industrial activity and certain measures—my colleague, the Deputy Prime Minister, has spoken about them—have been initiated to stimulate production and investment. Certain budgetary provisions have been made with regard to irrigation and so on, in which our people could be employed. We are also in the process of locating those aspects of economic activity where the intensive use of engineering skills would be conducive to better returns from existing investments as well as those contemplated in the Fourth Plan. Now in the past, the lack of personnel was a constraint on the adequate preparatory investigation of plan schemes and it also reduced the number of alternatives before us. To that extent that we are now able to remedy these defects and improve the quality of technical investigations and enlarge the area of choice, the present surplus might well prove to be an asset to the nation. It is not an easy job. We have to go through a difficult phase and the young people concerned will also have to put up with a certain amount of hardship. But I can assure the House that in the preparatory work for the Fourth Plan, as well as in the long-term measures and schemes which are finally included in the Plan itself, every effort will be made to mitigate this hardship and solve the problem.

One other point made was with regard to foreign collaboration. I agree with the hon. Member* that there have been many such cases where one does not see the necessity for going into collaboration. Inspite of our best efforts, we have been a little lax in this matter. I should like to state here that I myself am deeply concerned over this matter and I have taken it up with our Ministries time and again, as to how we can tighten up the whole procedure, so that we do not enter into such turnkey contracts or other collaboration arrangements in matters which we can do ourselves. Of course, this again, means a certain

* Shri Krishan Kant.

amount of hardship, because sometimes it is easier to take on such turnkey contracts or to have collaboration and produce something quicker and perhaps even cheaper.

Doing it in our own way may mean that it will take more time and that it will cost more money. Now, I personally think that if this is put squarely to the nation, they will be prepared for that extra effort. I do not want to go into the further details with regard to this.

I would like to assure hon. Members that this is something which we have very much at heart and which we are looking into. Unfortunately, many of these contracts and so on were entered into earlier and it is not possible to put an end to them immediately. But we are doing our best to see that in future no such step is taken. Not only should our effort be such but the decision and the implementation should be that Indian know-how and our technology are used to the fullest extent. If it is not available, sometimes we should even be prepared to change the scheme, if necessary, to fit in with the assets available and put up with that extra hardship.

Role of Planning Commission*

...The Planning Commission has been reorganised and that question is being reopened. I made a statement here—I think it was on the 17th July last year—indicating the decisions which the Government had taken. That is not a matter which is sought to be gone into now.

The present resolution, on the other hand, is rather premature because the report which is now being discussed was given to me by the Chairman on 14th March. It is quite a voluminous report, and I do not think Government has had sufficient time to go into all of it. Nevertheless, I would like to tell hon. Members what decisions have so far been taken.

The hon. Mover** of the resolution and also some other hon. Members kept on referring to some newspaper report. I do not know what report this is. But judging from their remarks I can safely say that it is entirely incorrect. There is no question of the Planning Commission rejecting the recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Commission.

They have gone into them very carefully and they have accepted many of them, some with some modifications. The other recommendations are under examination, in consultation with various Central Ministries or with State Governments.

Governments agree with the approach–which of course is how the Planning Commission has functioned all along–that the Planning Commission should indicate the implications of alternative approaches and strategies of development and should also be a policy instrument which would help in accelerating the tempo of development.

Government also share the view of the Administrative Reforms Commission and so does the Planning Commission, that while formulating the Five-Year Plan, the Planning Commission should keep before it the perspective of development over a longer period, the period varying for different sectors of economy. In fact, perhaps hon. Members are aware, the Planning Commission has had a Perspective Planning Division, which has been looking at planning from the long-term point of view.

Similarly, Government agree that the Five-Year Plan should take into account internal contingencies, such as the failure of the monsoon. This is something which, after the event takes place, one can be wise about. Now, when we know that such a thing can happen, certainly we must keep in view every possible contingency.

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* While replying to the debate on the Resolution moved by Shri S. Xavier regarding reorganisation of the Planning Commission, *L.S. Deb.*, 19 April, 1968, cc. 1893-1901.

** Shri S. Xavier.

But I am sure hon. Members will understand that it is not always possible to imagine what kind of calamities could overtake us. Certainly, the drought which took place in India was a very exceptional happening ; it was not something which one could expect.

Naturally, Government also agree that a realistic assessment of foreign aid should be made and it should be possible to devise a programme for reducing dependence on foreign aid for the Plan as a whole and not for each individual project or scheme.

The Administrative Reforms Commission have also suggested the detailed procedure to be followed by the Planning Commission in the process of Plan formulation, such as the composition of working groups, optimum utilisation of advisory bodies working under the Central Ministries and association of Development Councils. Government consider that in these matters while the recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Commission will be kept in view, the Planning Commission should at the same time, have sufficient discretion and flexibility of approach.

Now, with regard to the next suggestion Government and Planning Commission agree that the Commission should confine its scrutiny only to such schemes as involve a substantial amount of investment, sizable foreign exchange component, considerations of inter-State interest, significant policy implications from the national standpoint or implementation of basic national priorities and that detailed sectoral planning, including preparation and execution of individual schemes and programmes should, as at present, be attended to by the States. Various hon. Members here gave the impression that some kind of plan was drawn up without reference to the States and then the States were forced to accept them. This is far from the truth, because all plans are made in very close and constant consultation with the States. By the way, one of the last speakers, I believe Shri Desai, was under the impression that a number of Ministers are members of the Planning Commission. That is not true.

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Now, in the Planning Commission there is no Minister except myself and the Deputy Prime Minister, who is also the Finance Minister. We certainly thought that the whole working of the Planning Commission would be more realistic if the Finance Minister were associated with it.

Apart from the State Governments being consulted, each year the annual plans are finalised again in detailed consultation separately with each State Government and finally, at the level of the Chief Ministers themselves. The State Governments are also associated with the working groups.

There are certain suggestions regarding Central assistance to the States for their plans. This matter, naturally, cannot be decided upon without consulting with the State Governments. This will also be placed before the next meeting of the NDC in which, as you all know, all the State Governments are represented.

There was much criticism of the Planning Commission doing executive functions. In my last statement of July 17 last year, I had already made it clear that we have streamlined

it considerably. There is no time now otherwise I was going to describe what functions have been given up. But I must assure hon. Members that by taking away these executive functions it is not at all our intention to decrease the importance of the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission has a very significant place in the whole functioning of the Government and we consider that it would be disastrous if it were to be made less competent or less important.

I was very glad to hear from the hon. Member, Shri Piloo Mody, that he and the Swatantra Party do believe in planning because, I must confess, there were many statements, not perhaps in this Parliament but on earlier occasions when I certainly had the impression that they did not believe in the concept of planning for the nation-they may have believed in other items of planning–planning for the use of the resources of the nation, planning for the removing of disparities and, as my hon. friend on this side said planning for creating social change without which, I think, we can neither strengthen our economy nor make it a reality for the people as a whole.

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There was another question about the size of the Commission and about pruning it to make it more economical. I think, I have answered a question in this House where I gave details of the recommendations made by an internal re-organisation committees, which is chaired by Shri Venkatappiah, many of whose interim recommendations have already been accepted involving a saving of Rs. 11 lakh and a large number of posts.

Government has already decided that every year the Planning Commission should bring out a progress report on the implementation of the Plan and that this report should be placed on theTable of the House as soon as possible. I am sure, hon. Members are aware that evaluation reports prepared by the Programme Evaluation Organisation of the Planning Commission are already being supplied to all Members of Parliament. So, that keeps them in touch with what is happening.

The Administrative Reforms Commission have made a number of recommendations which pertain to the planning machinery in the States, such as the constitution and functioning of planning boards, responsibility of district development set-ups for planning at district level, preparation of annual progress reports and evaluation of programmes in the State plans. The attention of the State Governments has already been drawn to these recommendations and these also will be discussed at the next meeting of the NDC.

In spite of the denial, I must confess, I myself was under the impression that Shri Xavier was opposing his own Resolution because having started off by saying that we should accept what the ARC has recommended he went on to say that the Planning Commission should be scrapped. That is the impression that I and many Members got.

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Some hon. Members made a point that the Planning Commission is some kind of a parallel Government or a parallel Cabinet and somebody said that it is a super Cabinet...

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I am sorry in that case I disagree with the Commission as well as all those who made this remark*. Its functions have already been defined by two Members on this side. So, I need not go into that. There is no question of that. The Planning Commission is to see what resources the country has and how those resources can be used. There is no conflict between that kind of evaluation of resources and planning as to how to use them. Decisions are taken by the Government. The Government can accept their recommendations or need not accept them. But the point is that they work very closely alongwith the Government and this is the reason for my accepting to be the Chairman so that it would not be necessary suddenly at any stage to say that this cannot be done because, at all times, we are in touch with both the State Governments and the Central Government.

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There are also other members of the Cabinet**. There is no confusion at all. This situation can arise with any proposal that comes to the Cabinet. You can say, if the Prime Minister is there, how can anybody say anything. That could happen in regard to any proposal. Here, a proposal comes and the Cabinet must honestly and frankly express its opinion on it. But, as I said, that occasion cannot ordinarily arise because whatever comes is discussed with the Ministries concerned.

Naturally, none of us can have such a thing as an ideal plan because the needs of States and the Ministries are vast and we do not have the resources to meet all these demands and, therefore, the Planning Commission has the unpopular task of pruning them. Even though we consider that many of the demands are right or just and are very necessary for development, even then in view of the resources available, you have to cut some of these demands and, naturally, anybody whose plans are cut is not very happy about it. But, as I said, this has to be looked at in a larger perspective. The whole function of the Planning Commission is to keep all these needs of individual Central Ministries or of the States in a larger picture.

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The States have a great deal of say in it.***

Some friends opposite are very fond of drawing a picture of India which is on the downgrade all the time. I do not know how that helps them nor whether it cheers them to paint such a picture, or whether that gives a better image of India abroad.

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I don't need that to work me up****. I am in touch with the people of India and they are constantly working me up. I do not doubt that at all.

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* Replying to the remark of a Member who said, "The A.R.C. also said that".

** Replying to Shri Piloo Mody's observation, "If the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister recommend it to the Cabinet, how can the Cabinet reject it ?"

*** Replying to Shri S. Kandappan's remark : "The States have no say".

**** Replying to Shri Piloo Mody's remark : "We work you up."

India has gone through a tremendous ordeal in the last two years. That we have come out of that ordeal with flying colours is a tribute to the planning machinery, to the base we have laid here and all that. We may have made many mistakes, and we have made mistakes. We are facing many difficulties today. But let the hon. Members who spoke of the economic mess, look around the world and tell me which country they are not today facing economic difficulties, whether they have socialist planning or capitalist planning. They are all facing tremendous economic difficulties. We happen to be a part of this world. We are not living in some other world. So, that also has an influence on our economy and its growth.

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This is not an occasion really to go into the details of planning. This was a very limited Resolution with regard to the proposals made in the final report of the A.R.C. But, for once in my life, I agree with something which the hon. Member, Mr. Jha, has said. I agree with him that the present situation cannot be faced with timidity; it does need boldness, it needs daring, it needs vision and also it needs a certain amount of unity. We have people who believe in daring, boldness and so on but they use it not for building, but unfortunately for taking us down–all the agitations and so on which take place are not helping to build the country or to take planning forward. We need vision. Here is this Parliament to provide the vision. The Planning Commission should certainly also have vision, but they are working in a limited context. The vision is to be provided by political figures...(*Interruptions*) I agree with you on this, and I think, we should all help to provide the boldness and give the vision and to create an atmosphere in the country where this work can be done. That is one of the most important things.

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What is the correct policy ? *Every time I have to repeat the same thing. You think that one policy is correct ; the Mover of the Resolution thinks that another policy is correct; we think that our policy is correct. Obviously, we admit that we have not always been able to implement our policies in the manner in which they should be implemented. That, We do agree, but I do not agree that the policy has failed. We do need...(*Interruptions*).

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The result is there for all to see**. If only you will try to look around the country and see what is happening and compare it with the stage at which the country was even two or three years ago, you will find that there has been a vast change; it is a continuous change; and it is a change which is strengthening our country and taking it forward...

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* Replying to Shri Vasudevan Nair who said : "Correct policies".

** Replying to Shri Nambiar's remark : "The result is the guide to indicate which is correct or bad".

Planning Commission–Its Role and Functions*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the scope of this discussion was made clear, that it is not really a discussion on the Fourth Plan but on the Planning Commission. However, many comments have been made on the Plan and its so-called short-comings as also on the entire history of free India. And, the favourite comment of the Opposition that nothing has been done in these last twenty years was heard from several lips.

I do not think, Sir, that we need look up statistical tables to see what has happened in India; we need only go to the towns and, I would say, the villages also. I am fully conscious of the fact that there are areas which are still backward, there are communities which are poorer and more under-privileged than the rest. I am conscious that very much remains to be done for them.

But the problems which we are facing today are the problems of development and growth and the changes which growth is bringing about. And it is because of the changes, it is because of what has been done in these years that these new problems, the new consciousness, the new demands and expectations have grown in the people.

The discussion began perhaps appropriately, with what seem to be a new alignment of forces here. My Hon. friend, a member from the Swatantra Party who spoke, quoted extensively from the speech of Shri Namboodiripad, the Chief Minister of Kerala, and pointed out that there was very much in common between them.

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I was wondering what comment we would have heard from the hon. Member, Shri Piloo Modi, if he had been present here. It was also a very interesting interpretation of Shri Namboodiripad's point of view. I do not know whether Shri Namboodiripad would be flattered by this or not. Perhaps, he will hear more from him directly.

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Another point which was made was that the present Plan has not evoked enthusiasm. A comment was made by one of our Congress members who spoke that it is because we are now trying to be much business-like. It was right that in the beginning we should spread our wings wide because many things had to be started and a new atmosphere had to be created in the country. These things have been started and to a certain extent, that

* Participating in the debate on the Demands for Grants, Planning Commission, *L.S. Deb.*, 24 April 1969, cc. 313-24.

atmosphere, a new outlook has been created in the country. But, after that, because of the many difficulties which we had to face, the difficulties of invasion, the difficulties of drought, we have had a constraint of resources. So, today the Commission is shorn of the old glamour and, at the same time, it has shed some of the powers of prior financial scrutiny and sanction which had made it a target of such bitter attack and criticism on the floor of the House.

The Planning Commission today is certainly more functional and is applying itself to the solid, if not so glamorous, task of detailed workman-like programme planning and it will certainly continue its useful role of reconciling Centre and State view points and providing economic intelligence and advice to the different layers of Government.

I was very sorry at some of the remarks that have been made here against the members of the Planning Commission, which were rather unfair to them. I should like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation of the work of the Deputy Chairman and members of the Planning Commission. I must admit that my own work in this is practically nil, because I do not preside at the meetings which do the detailed work. Some impression was given here as if members of the Government are concerned with the day to day work of the Commission and are somehow influencing it. This impression is not correct.

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As I said,the main work is done by the Deputy Chairman and members. The Chairman comes in more as the coordinating person with regard to the Central Ministries and State Governments. They have done their common work in a practical way so as to finish it within the short time available to them.

My hon. friend, Shri Surendranath Dwivedi, has made the remark that perhaps the Chief Ministers should not be present. I am sure the hon. Members will agree that the plan would be most unrealistic if the Chief Ministers were not in the National Development Council. They are there as representatives of Government.

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What ever it is, a Chief Minister does represent the State.* That is what I am also saying. And if you have elected him as Chief Minister, obviously, he comes to the Council as the representative of Orissa State.....(*Interruptions*) That is your internal business. I do not know whether there is need to air it publicly here.

There was the usual discussion also as to the role of the N.D.C. The Plan does not suddenly descend on the members there as a new document. I interrupted my friend from DMK when he was speaking to tell him that the State Plans and the main Plan are discussed at every level with representatives of State Governments, at official level, at ministerial

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* Responding to Shri Surendranath Dwivedy's observations "I think there is some misunderstanding. What I said was that when the Chief Ministers attend the meetings of the National Development Council, either they attend it as representatives of States or as representatives of political parties. That is the difference I have made".

level and, ultimately, at the Chief Ministers level. Even major decisions, such as on the criteria for allotment of funds, were taken by a Committee of the N.D.C. which consisted of all the Chief Ministers. So their point of view is represented at all stages before the Plan is finalised. Now, it is true that because of Shri Annadurai's illness, he was not able to come but some other Minister did come. This was not the fault of the Planning Commission because they had sent their invitation to him alongwith others.

The National Development Council exists because planning, in its very nature, must be national. I do not understand what people mean when they say, "We do not accept the Plan'. Does it mean that they will forego the Central assistance ? What does it mean ? The Centre makes plans and the States make plans, and certain allocations are made. It is true that every State and every Central Ministry feels that its allocations have been cut unfairly and have been cut so drastically to the bone that it is difficult to proceed with the projects. That is a feeling which is shared by everybody. But these cuts were necessary because of the restricted resources. Every State is free to increase its resources, through additional mobilisation, and to that extent increase what it can do in the Plan. There is absolutely no restriction to that. It is only the Central assistance which is fixed. Their own resources are not fixed at all. It seems they are rejecting the Central assistance by rejecting the plan, seems to me a very peculiar sort of situation.

The Chief Minister of Kerala and the Deputy Chief Minister of West Bengal, although they did speak of their dissent from the majority view, have very categorically stated that there will be no lacking or no hesitation in their fully implementing the Plan in their States. They have made that clear. I hope that is true of the other State Governments also.

I was naturally happy when one of our friends, from this side, pointed out that one of our achievements in these years is that we have converted the Jana Sangh from not believing in the Plan into firm believers in the Plan. I think, that is a big achievement.

As the hon. Members know, swadeshi is one of the first and original policies of the Congress Party to which the Government had adhered. In this context, this Plan is very much a swadeshi Plan because it is entirely oriented towards self-reliance. As you must have seen, we have said that within 2 years concessional food from outside will be stopped and, very soon, afterwards, we will reduce our dependence on foreign aid. Foreign aid, in net terms, will be reduced by the end of the Fourth Plan to about half the present level. I am sure the hon. Members understand that these results cannot be achieved all at once. But, certainly,the whole Plan is directed towards this goal of self-reliance.

The two main points which were made were about unemployment and regional disparities. I have, on an earlier occasion also, spoken in this House on the problem of unemployment and under-employment and expressed my grave concern. How does one tackle this problem ? How does one create jobs ? Finally, it is only when the work of development itself goes ahead that jobs can be created.

Some hon. Members said that if only we had stuck to improving agriculture, everything would have been all right in this country. I did not understand then and I did not understand now, how agriculture can be improved without having industries. The same hon. Member

said that it was right that we were building up our defences. How can we build up our defences if we do not have industry to back it up the infrastructure which can provide the equipment which our defence forces need ? Therefore, development in all these sectors is very closely interlinked. We cannot separate agriculture from industry; nor, in the circumstances in India, can we separate industry from agriculture, because, that is also very much dependent on agriculture. Hon. Members know that there has been a real advance on the agricultural front.

It is true that it is largely those farmers who had irrigated land, who were able to make full use of inputs such as the high-yielding varieties of seeds, fertilisers and so on, but even so, the other people did get some advantage. Increased agricultural production has created more jobs and has given some benefit although, I admit, marginally, to the poorer people who reside there. I am fully aware of the fact that very much more has to be done and, I think that, as we go ahead in this Plan, we will be able to be a step nearer to our goal. The last speaker or the one before the last speaker said something about *briani* or cake of something. No such remarks have been made by anybody on our side. On the contrary, in every speech and statement we have been emphasizing that the days and years to come will be full of hardship. No country, no system, has been able to develop without paying the price for it. Here perhaps some people think that if we just take the word 'capitalism' we will immediately create a new situation and others think that by taking the name of 'socialism' we will bring about immediate change. But none of these things is magical. It is how you work them that makes a difference.

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I do not want to go into the definition of 'socialism' which somebody wanted us to define.

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I can do and I shall do it when you have the debate some days later, but I am not doing it here.* (*Interruptions*).

It is not becasue of uncertainties of estimates that it is not possible to give the precise figures of additional employment. I did give some figures earlier in this Session. I only want to stress that the employment problems cannot be divorced from the question of productivity and the rise in incomes of different sections of population.

About the influence of foreign aid, I think, we are all agreed. We know that no country in the modern world can be entirely independent of help from other countries. On the other hand, we also know that this help, if it grows, is harmful, and that is why this Plan is specially making efforts to reduce such help from outside.

My hon. friend from the Jan Sangh said that, because of our large population, we had no need of technology, and that the modern system of technology was relevant to the West

* Responding to a Member's remark, "Do it".

because they had a small population. This, I think, was an extra-ordinary statement to make because it was because of our lack of technology at the earlier stage in our history that we fell into poverty and backwardness. Today, we must make up this lacune and we must proceed to take advantage of the experience of other nations, adding to it our own experience and our own knowledge, if we really want to solve our problems.

The Planning Commission is not a political body at all.

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I do not think it is quasi-political either.* They take up questions from purely economic points of view. However, when they meet the Chief Ministers, each Chief Minister brings a little bit of his politics with regard to what he needs in his State and so on.

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That becomes political, but the Planning Commission does not make it political.** I do not know in what sense the word 'political' is used here. I think even the Chief Ministers do not bring in their ideology. They bring the needs of the State which are very genuine needs. But the Planning Commission has to take an all-India view. They know how much money is available. How it should be distributed was decided by the Chief Ministers themselves. It is true that earlier, the Planning Commission itself did much of this work, but now they have divested themselves of some of this responsibility.

Planning simply cannot be decentralised because naturally each State wants to look at it from its own point of view. And the whole point of planning is how to match programmes with resources so that the entire country benefits. Obviously in this process everybody has to sacrifice. Every State, every Ministry has to sacrifice a little bit. There was a figure for Tamil Nadu a little lower than what was indicated at first. That is due to the new criteria which were evolved again by the Chief Ministers. That is not the only State in which this has happened. This has happened to some other States also. It is true that Tamil Nadu has many difficulties but it is one of our advanced States and I would request the hon. Members to go and visit some of the areas which are really backward.

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We are very deeply concerned about all areas which are backward and I mentioned Bihar, Eastern U.P. and some of the Hill areas and Orissa. Rajasthan is of course going through a very difficult and painful experience at the moment. All these areas need very special care. It is precisely because of this we should have a Central Plan. Even then we cannot meet all their needs. At least we can give a direction and help them to some extent.

Ultimately regional imbalances also can be redressed only over a period of time. It cannot be done suddenly. Here again we are between two contradictions. For instance, how did we increase our agricultural production? By helping those people who could use

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* Responding to Shri S. Kandappan's remark. "It is a quasi-political body".

** Replying to Shri Ranga's remark, "Planning itself is political".

the help. We would not have had the food at the moment when we needed it urgently if we had not done this. Yet it has created a problem; it has created disparity between the farmer with irrigated land and the farmer with a dry land. This kind of disparity is all the time being created in the very process of growth to some extent. As it is created, we have to see how we can remedy this situation. In this Plan we are trying to do that. The disparities cannot be remedied immediately or to the full extent. At least we are taking steps in the right direction and weightage is given to be backward States. My colleague, the Deputy Minister, spelt out the different proportions of allotment.

The investment in agriculture is not less. It is more than what it was in the previous plans; but apart from that a good deal of investment is not shown directly under agriculture because, it comes from the many programmes which are financed by financial institutions such as the Agricultural Refinance Corporation, Agro Industries Corporation, Rural Electrification Corporation and so on. There are also other schemes like fertiliser plants, rural electrification, etc. which are also for the benefit of agriculture, but expenditure on which is not included in this figure.

So, if you take that total figure, you will find that the allocation is very much larger.

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We can add it up now, but I think, we can deal with it when we have a debate after a few days.*

The hon. Member from the S.S.P. who spoke, spoke—if I may use the world—with great glee prophesying the failure of the plan. Now, Sir, what does the failure of the plan denote ? It is not the failure of one particular political party. It is a failure which will affect every single State, because, all the programmes in the plan are for the benefit of the States. Even in respect of what is in the Central sector, a large amount of it is concerned with schemes which may be Centrally-sponsored, but which are implemented in the States. So, I think, even if we think that the plan does not go far enough, it is incumbent on us to see that it succeeds. It is only when it succeeds that all these schemes will be one step ahead in the different States.

I think that many of the hon. Members have been looking at the Plan from a very narrow point of view; and from the point of view of their own States; and this is natural. I am not complaining about it. But I am only drawing their attention to this fact that it is only when the base of the country is strong that the whole process of development can go ahead even in each State.

Somebody said that the plan figures are not definite because of my statement that we will look at it again. The two Statements are not contradictory. That is, the figures that have been given or the allotments which have been made are definite for the time being. But, we think that it may be possible to raise further resources and this will be done not once only, but it will be a continuous process. As we can raise further resources certainly

* Responding to Shri Ranga's remark, "What is the total figure"?

things will be added and programmes which we were not able to do, can be taken up. And this again depends very largely on the State Governments if they are willing to take up this matter.

Everybody is loud in asking for more projects and more schemes; they are all desirable schemes, no doubt, but when it comes to the question as to where the money comes from, there, I am afraid, the States are not so vocal.

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In Parliament, all of you are representing the States.*

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I don't think the States are outside the nation. They are part of the nation.**

The hon. Member from the Swatantra party said that the Planning Commission met with different types of people but not agriculturists. I may say that they do hold meetings with leading agriculturists from different parts of the country.

My hon. friend from Ladakh is not here—yes, he is here. I am glad he is here. I want to tell him that the Fourth Plan outlay is Rs. 4.32 crores against the expenditure of Rs. 1.5 crores during the Third Plan in Ladakh. The State Government has agreed to give very special attention to developments in Ladakh and we hope sincerely that the rate of progress will be stepped up. I know that all hill people have had special difficulties and places like Ladakh have also been suffering.

The Planning Commission, some people said, is a large body, but as I said in answer to a question here, 77 posts were abolished last year and many posts are unfilled and at present, pending final review. The total fall in number is about 250.

I do not want to go into all the points about the Plan. The Plan is not merely a collection of projects or schemes, but a well thought-out approach as to how to strengthen the base and the pace of progress so that the community can advance on all fronts. If we look at what happened in the last years, we will see that industrial production has trebled and special attention was given to develop basic and heavy industries. This is a point of special criticism as far as Jan Sangh and Swatantra Parties are concerned. But we consider it very necessary to the development, to the growth and even to the very existence of any country in the contemporary world. We ourselves have sufficient manufacturing capacity for many types of machinery and for hydro and thermal power generation, heavy mining machinery and many other types of things. This I am only saying as an example because every now and then it is said that nothing has been done.

I hope that the House will unanimously support the demands of the Planning Commission because it is only then the Plan will be accepted as a national document—of

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* Replying to Shri Ranga's observation, "Are you addressing the National Development Council or the Parliament."

** Responding to Shri Nath Pai's reply. "No; we represent the nation, Madam."

course with the dissent that sufficient money is not allotted to various States. If you do not give your support to the Plan, you cannot expect the public to give full support and if the public does not give full support it is not the Planning Commission which suffers but it is the States and the people who suffer because, as I said, the Plan is basically the projects and schemes which are undertaken by the State Government for the welfare of the people. Also, of course, if the Plan does not succeed, then there is no question of adding resources or adding schemes. That can only come as extra to what has already succeeded... (*Interruptions*).

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The hon. Member who spoke last told us some sorrowful tales about dacoits. This is something for the State Government to look into because it is a question of law and order. But development of the area will help in the solution of the problem.

Objectives of Fourth Five-Year Plan*

Sir, the debate itself must have convinced the hon. Members how very difficult it is to have a plan that will satisfy all sections of the House. Many of the members have themselves replied to most of the points raised by other members. As usual, the criticism has been mutually contradictory in many important respects. Perhaps the one point on which many members opposite agree is that they emphasise the negative aspect of the plan, that is, what has not happened. Very few of them take any look at all at what has been achieved.

We have, as is not unusual in this House, hon. Members sitting opposite there and Shri Masani, who makes a strong plea for the private sector. At first, we were called only fellow-travellers, but now we have been pushed even further and we have been coupled with Marxists, including my good friend, Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao and others.

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At the other end there are some of our hon. friends sitting on that side who have linked us with the capitalists and who are for much greater control. On one side they want abolition of controls and on the other side they want greater control and they see a curtailment of the public sector in the present Plan. At the same time, from our side many constructive suggestions have been made and some from the other side also.

It is an indication of the rising frustration of the Swantantra Party that one of their older members, the first speaker, should have descended to abusive and strong language. I shall not tire the patience of hon. Members by referring to some obviously misleading and fatuous remarks. Hon. Members from the otherside have never hesitated to criticise the Government in the strongest possible terms. We are well able to look after ourselves and do not object to such criticism; however, it is not in the tradition of the House to criticise those who are unable to defend themselves here and, if I may say so, I thought it was in bad taste to mention the Deputy Chairman and members of the Planning Commission by name and to make regrettable personal attacks in such unrestrained language.

It is typical of the hon. Member, Sir, that of all animals he should have chosen to allude to the mule. His reference was in terms of popular uninformed prejudice rather than the real qualities of the animal. I must admit that I used to speak of the mule in rather the same language myself until I had occasion to go to Bhutan with my father and to ride the mule for five to six days crossing four very high ranges of the Himalayas. The manner in

* Replying to the debate on the Motion regarding the Draft Fourth Five-Year Plan, *L.S. Deb.*, 12 May, 1969, cc 286-97.

which the hon. Member spoke about it is the proof that he has approached the Fourth Plan and indeed the very question of planning with a closed and prejudiced mind. Does Shri Masani not know that the mule has been of invaluable help to our army over the years.....

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This animal has proved to be a strong dependable creature, steady, sure-footed and advancing towards the set goal, along difficult and steep tracks which are too difficult for any other animal or mode of transport. All over the world the mule symbolises hard work, strength, dependability and dogged determination.

The hon. Member once again introduced into this report, his own argument about what kind of planning we should have in this country. He wanted us to adopt indicative planning as it exists in France. A reply to that has been made but, nevertheless, I would like to say that it may be an example of planning suited to an economy which is industrially highly developed and the central structures of which remain capitalistic. The hon. Member is a widely read person and he should have read–perhaps he has deliberately chosen to ignore such reference in this House–that there are also French planners who have indicated that their model is not necessarily suitable for developing countries which are faced with multiple problems such as we have in India.

There is today a large measure of common ground in the techniques of drawing up plans and in the methods of executing them. While, on the one hand, there is recognition that market mechanisms, decentralised decision making and indirect controls have their value, on the other hand, there is increasing willingness to acknowledge the utility of control and public action which were formerly considered to be an anathema. Now, planning does not permit of any wholesale and unthinking importation of foreign models, whether of one kind or another. Planning has to take into account our own condition, our own circumstances and, as one of our members said just now, the genius of our own people. Our planning has to be, and it shall be, Indian planning. We do not follow either the Soviet method or the French or any other method.

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The nature of Indian Planning is unique and pioneering in its wake, because we were the very first to attempt planning within the framework of parliamentary democracy. No other country, large or small, which is following our political system, had undertaken any such effort, when we embarked on planned economic development in 1950-51.

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We have made progress in the past 18 years despite our very special circumstances– Firstly, there is the democratic set up which rules out authoritarian methods, the federal set up and sub-continental dimensions of the country calling for reconciliation of Centre-States point of view, the problems of far-flung areas, problems of disparities in levels of development between regions etc. and, of course, the growing population which does erode the fruits of progress. Then, there were exceptional difficulties, for example, the Chinese

aggression of 1962, two successive aggressions and two years of unprecedented drought. While I have the greatest respect for Acharya Kripalani, I do not think that anybody could have anticipated these developments. It is true that we have been having drought in India in one part or another for many years. But the sort of drought which we experienced in the last two years we have not had in India for over a hundred years. It was something which was entirely unprecedented in nature and unknown here before. So, one should not take these things lightly. These are realities which cannot be ignored, however much it may suit some of us to do so.

Defence expenditure alone had to be stepped up from a little over Rs. 300 crore a year to over Rs. 1,000 crore a year. In five year period this meant an unavoidable and inescapable diversion of very scarce resources to the extent of Rs. 3,500 crore. Similarly, in two years of drought we lost something like 30 million tonnes of food and the impact of this major set back should be well-known to hon. Members of the Swatantra Party, because when that impact was felt only last year, the representatives of industry were amongst the loudest to demand sizeable increases in the public sector outlay so as to broaden the demand for their products and to sustain them through the recession. These are hard facts and realities which we simply cannot ignore.

The hon. Member used certain figures, rather selectively, in an attempt to show that people have become poorer. Now, had he taken the base year 1950-51, a year before the commencement of planning, and worked out changes in 1967-68 over the base year, he would have presented a different picture. To present the case in perspective, may I cite a few figures ?

As compared with 1950-51, in 1967-68 the *per capita* availability of foodgrains increased by 16 per cent, of edible oils by 18 per cent, of cloth by 37 per cent, of sugar by 43 per cent and of coffee by 40 per cent. This has taken place despite a large addition to our population. The annual rate of increase in population has gone up from 1.25 per cent in the First Plan to 2.5 per cent in recent years. Much as one appreciates the thoughtfulness of those who have not added to the population, I might say, some of the increase is not due to the efforts of individuals but is due to certain health measures, that is, substantial fall in the mortality rate by 45 per cent and increase in the longevity of life. This is no mean an achievement and cannot but be attributed to our planned efforts.

The question which has distributed many Members here, and as mentioned by Acharyaji also, is the question of our debts and in particular why we should ask for re-scheduling of debts. But this need arises from the same consideration as the need for fresh foreign loans or direct foreign investment, that is, the imbalance between exports and imports. This is one way and a very effective way of reducing our obligations in regard to our debt payments. The justification for debt relief derives from the fact that large proportion of our export earnings is now being required to meet the debt burden, leaving insufficient foreign exchange for our necessary imports. It is recognised today by all developing countries that they need substantial foreign aid in the transitional stage of development to be gradually reduced and, finally, eliminated once the imbalance in foreign trade has been corrected. It is also widely recognised that foreign loans should carry very low rates of

interest and that the period of repayment should be long. However, a fair proportion of our earlier loans carried a relatively high rate of interest with a relatively shorter period of payment. This has put considerable strain on our balance of payments at a time when our export capacity is not high enough to bear the burden. The negotiation for re-scheduling is primarily to gain some relief in this matter and it has the effect of easing the burden of old loans as well as new ones so that the needs of developing countries are better met.

Acharyaji said something about our old tradition of begging. But today this is not old tradition but a contemporary situation which does not apply merely to us or to other developing countries like us. It is something which is also faced by the developed and advanced countries. In fact, there is not a single country in the world which does not face it. Developed countries seek debt relief though camouflaged in different forms.

There has been great hardship, of course, by the rise in prices and I would be the first to admit it. It is not something which we can ignore or which we can gloss over. But it has to be seen in perspective, between 1950-51 and 1964-65, the price levels had risen at an annual compound rate of 2.5 per cent in India and this compares favourably with many other countries. It is only since then that there has been a sharp rise in prices due to the unprecedented drought and the consequent decline in agricultural production. With the improvement in agricultural production, a measure of stability in prices is being restored. This stability will be maintained in the Fourth Plan in view of the emphasis on agricultural production and building up of buffer-stock of foodgrains.

Many Members have spoken about the outlay on agricultural production not being sufficient. The other day, when I was talking about our increased emphasis on agriculture, some Members raised unnecessary doubts as to how the figures I gave compared with the corresponding figures in the Third Plan.

I have indicated that, if one were to put together all the direct as well as indirect outlays on agricultural production, one would arrive at the figure of Rs. 4,606 crore, constituting 32 per cent of the total outlay in the public sector. In a sense, even this figure does not fully reflect the investments contemplated in the Plan for the augmentation of agricultural production. To give just one instance, we should further include a portion of the investment on the generation and transmission of power which relates to agricultural production programmes.

Coming to the earlier Plans I should like to say that, according to a detailed analysis of the Planning Commission, the corresponding or comparable outlay on schemes benefiting agricultural production in the Second Plan was of the order of Rs. 1,278 crore or 26.6 per cent of the public sector outlay. The comparable figures for the Third Plan are Rs. 2,112 crore or 28.1 per cent of the total outlay.

It is thus clear that greater emphasis has been laid on agricultural production as compared with the earlier Plans, and investments have been substantially increased both in absolute terms and as percentage of the total outlay contemplated in the Fourth Plan.

We should also remember that a significant portion of the increase in incomes accruing in the agricultural sector will remain in private hands and will be utilised for investment

in agricultural improvement. The Fourth Plan estimates such direct investments in agriculture and allied programmes in the private sector at Rs. 1,800 crore as against only Rs. 800 crore in the Third Plan.

If we take a composite view of the outlays in both private and public sector it will be clear that the Fourth Plan accords a higher priority to allocation of resources for agricultural development as compared with the Third Plan.

Many Members also expressed concern about the comparative neglect of the needs of the rural areas in our Plan and have called for a shift in bias from the urban to the rural areas in our strategy of economic development. Development outlays in many sectors such as power, transport and communications benefit the national economy as a whole. It will be difficult to apportion the benefit as between rural and urban areas. However, we have already indicated that the new Plan attaches greater importance than the earlier Plans to agricultural production which constitutes the sheetanchor of rural economy. From a quick analysis of the programmes and the social services such as education, medical relief, public health and welfare, and welfare of backward classes, benefiting the rural areas, taking to the outlay on agricultural production and other related programmes and the rural component of social services, is seen that the public sector outlay in the Fourth Plan benefiting the rural areas will be of the order of Rs. 5,666 crore. This will constitute 39.3 per cent or very nearly 40 per cent of the total public sector outlay in the Fourth Plan. A very substantial portion of the outlay on the building of economic overheads such as power, transport and communications is not included in this figure because of the difficulties of apportionment. The comparable figures for the Third Plan are Rs. 2,560 crore or 34.1 per cent, and for the Second Plan Rs. 1,532 crore or 31.9 per cent.

Prof. Kabir and some other hon. Members mentioned rural electrification. The provision for rural electrification has been increased from Rs. 75 crore in the Second Plan to Rs. 105 crore in the Third Plan, and for the Fourth Plan a provision of Rs. 363 crore is proposed apart from the funds to be made available by the Rural Electrification Corporation and other institutions.

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With regard to the position of fertilisers, pesticides and tractors, the provision has gone up from Rs. 72 crore in the Second Plan to Rs. 125 crore in the Third Plan, and now to Rs. 854.5 crore in the Fourth Plan. The example of pump sets is significant because they are directly relevant to agricultural production, just as fertilisers are. The number of pump sets which was 5.13 lakhs at the end of the Third Plan is expected to increase by nearly 5 times that figure to 23.1 lakhs at the end of the Fourth Plan. Therefore, it is not really correct to say that the rural areas have been neglected. However, it is indeed true that India lives in its $5\,^1/_2$ lakh villages and the true test of development in this country lies in the betterment of the rural masses, specially those in the backward pockets and those which have been under-privileged in the past. It is not easy to wipe out the disparities or suddenly raise the level of those who have been most backward and who have been discriminated against in many ways.

Special mention has been rightly made of our brethren from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Every effort is now being made to help them and to see that although the disparity cannot immediately be bridged, at least it should be lessened and they should be given better opportunities to move ahead.

An hon. Member spoke of the public sector enterprises as laggards and drones. I do not think that this description is at all justified. The present investment in Central Government industrial and commercial enterprises over 80 in number is of the order of Rs. 3500 crore. Out of this the investment in 55 running concerns including Hindustan Steel accounts nearly to Rs. 3200 crore. During 1967-68 these enterprises showed a profit of over Rs. 48 crore. Substantial profits were earned by Indian Oil Corporation, Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd., Fertiliser Corporation of India, Oil and Natural Gas Commission, Bharat Electronics Ltd. as well as 25 other corporations. Many enterprises have declared dividends ranging from 5% to 15%. However, it is true that 24 public enterprises showed a net loss of Rs. 35 crore. Government are not at all complacent about the situation and are fully aware of the great need to improve the working and profitability of these undertakings. Some points were made about the appointments of experts rather than bureaucrats. The old policy is being changed and we are going in this direction. We are trying to use expertise and knowledge wherever it may exist.

I am rather sorry to see that some attempt was made to try to bring in a north-south element in this debate. I would like to assure my hon. friend opposite that the distribution of Central assistance is made on the basis of objective criteria arrived at by consensus among the Chief Ministers themselves. Tamil Nadu was represented at this meeting by a Minister, Shri Madhavan.The consensus formula was proposed by the Chief Minister of Kerala and seconded by the Chief Minister of Maharashtra and agreed to by all as the best possible in the circumstances. Within the framework of this formula, there was hardly any scope for the exercise of discrimination against the States. Only 10% of the Central assistance was left to be distributed among the States with reference to special problems, and subjective judgment was involved in the distribution only of this amount. Now perhaps the hon. Member will be interested to know that Tamil Nadu is one of the few States which will have a significantly larger Fourth Plan than its Third Plan.

Tamil Nadu will, in terms of aggregate outlay be the third biggest. The only two States which will have bigger plans are Maharashtra which has a strong resource base and U.P. with nearly $2^1/_2$ times the population of Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu should therefore not have any special grievance–apart from the general grievance of all States and all Central Ministries that the Plan should be larger.

Some questions were also asked about Central assistance. As I have said on a previous occasion, the Central assistance will be released in terms of block loans and grants under broad heads of development and will not now be tied to specific schemes.

There was one very important point made regarding employment and practically all Members rightly showed their concern. This morning as you are aware, Sir, a deputation of the Samajvadi Yuvuk Samaj met me. This deputation was accompanied by some hon.

Members. They presented a Memorandum and they wanted Government to do more to solve the unemployment problem. In fact they asked for a Commission to be set up to study the problem, and also suggested some other steps.

As I explained to them and as I have said already in this House, we are very deeply concerned about the unemployment problem and it is an anxiety which we share with every parent, with every teacher, in fact, with every young person. Some of the more acute forms of educated unemployment are directly related to recession. But, on the whole, the problem is the result of growth of general education at a faster rate than of the economy as a whole. The House knows that the Committee of Experts of which Professor Dantewala as Chairman and Professor Raj and Shri Lahiri as Members has been set up to examine certain aspects of this important problem : but we need not wait for the report of this Committee, because our entire approach to development has had a deliberate employment bias.

We have not been advocates of big machinery for agriculture but have emphasised the use of small implements by the small farmers and agriculturists and workers to help new trades and the small enterpreneurs as for the land army, and this is one of the proposals of the Memorandum. I myself have always been attracted by the idea but I feel that it will need to be very carefully considered in its practical and other aspects.

I have told the Members who came to see me that we will certainly give consideration to the suggestions which they have made. Some of them are already being looked into in depth.

My hon. friend from the Jan Sangh wanted a Swadeshi Plan. The hon. Member knows that this is an aspect which I have been stressing all along, even before the Draft Outline came out. I feel that the Plan is already swadeshi in that it puts the whole emphasis on self-reliance. The net foreign aid in the Fourth Plan will only be 8% of the total investment. The Plan also seeks to put a stop to the import of foodgrains on concessional terms within two years.

The Plan lays emphasis on the role of developing machinery and equipment as also domestic know-how and expertise.

I think it is rather unfair on the part of the hon. Member opposite to say that Delhi has been specially discriminated against. As he rightly pointed out, all of us are very much concerned with the development of Delhi, but in this particular situation, everybody is discriminated against in a manner of speaking, because of our lack of resources.

Now, several Members have drawn attention to the needs of various areas and different classes of people. It is natural that each Member should draw attention to the special needs of his own State.

We are very conscious of the lacunae in the Plan and the needs to help each State. Each State feels that if it could have more irrigation, it could feed the whole country, if it had certain industrial schemes, it could provide employment to vast numbers and they are right in thinking so. With all our sympathy with these demands and aspirations, it is not

possible to provide for all the desirable things which need to be done. The Plan is a design of development which has to define objectives very selectively, and formulate measures which must be adopted to realise these objectives. While the goals are important, the means to realise them are not less important. We have heard a lot about how many more necessary things should be done, but not so much thought has been given nor are steps proposed for the achieving of these objectives. In the months and years ahead, Parliament will have the opportunity of discussing these measures. One of the hon. Members said that the time here was much too short. We want the entire country to discuss these questions...

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As we have said, the Plan will be reviewed from year to year and certainly if anything can be added to it or new programmes be taken up, there will be no hesitation in doing so.

The Plan must lead the country forward with greater vigour and determination to its goal of a more prosperous and economic order. Sir, the venarable Acharya ended his speech by saying or by asking : where is the country going? I do not know about the hon. Members. But I personally have no doubt at all...

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It is going towards progress and prosperity and towards lessening of disparity. But the journey is hard and long and it is going to take courage and determination and co-operation of all of us together...(*Interruptions*). It is upto Shri Piloo Mody to find out what kind of Government can have the people's support. But I doubt very much if it is his Party.

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*As I said earlier, I beg to move :

"That the Fourth Five Year Plan, 1969-71 (Draft), laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha on the 28th April, 1969, be taken into consideration."

Madam, I have pleasure in initiating this discussion because we always welcome the opportunity to get the advice of the House on important documents before us. The draft Plan has been before the country for some time now and our object is to secure not only the widest publicity for the Plan which is a national Plan but even more important to have a wide public discussion and appreciation of its basic objectives, priorities and programmes. As the hon. House knows, the implementation of the Plan began on April Ist. However, as I announced on another occasion, as we go along and more especially after the Planning Commission has reassessed the resources position in the light of the Report of the Finance Commission suitable adjustments may be made and in this process the views which are expressed here in the House in the N.D.C. and the other forums will naturally be kept in view.

Whenever we have a debate of this kind, it normally assumes a set pattern which has become familiar to us; but recently we have seen a slight shift in the position of some of the parties, who did not previously approve even of the process of planning. Today we

* Moving the Motion on the Fourth Five Year Plan, *R.S. Deb.*, 13 May, 1969, cc 2644-51.

find that some approve of planning but do not approve of this particular plan; others are for what might be called indicative planning. Similarly we have our other friends opposite who think of their own favourite alternative strategy. The House is aware that ours is the first country which has taken to this kind of planned economic development in the conditions of parliamentary democracy. We have therefore to take along with us people of widely differing, in fact sometimes diametrically opposed points of view. That is why it is not possible for the Plan to be an ideal Plan. We cannot suit the desires, or, I may say, even the needs of all the people. The Plan must take all these viewpoints broadly into consideration yet keep its objectives clear. Our own approach is unambiguous. We do not believe that planning is a piece of equipment which can be taken from any one country and transplanted into our soil. Our plans have to be Indian plans, routed in Indian soil and nurtured by Indian thought. We seek Indian solutions to our problems. Therefore our planning has to take into account our own conditions and circumstances. Also of course it has to take into account not only the elements of our strength but also the elements of our weaknesses.

Now this Plan has sought to emphasize our objective of swadeshi or self-sufficiency. This is reflected in the aim to completely stop imports of foodgrains in two year's time, to bring down the net foreign aid to half the present level and thirdly to emphasize the development of indigenous designs and consultancy organisations. There is sometimes a misleading impression in the public mind as to the extent of our reliance on foreign aid. We must realise that although foreign aid is important and it has helped us in times of difficulty, the fact remains that our Plan is predominantly a national effort which is undertaken with the help of our own resources. The net foreign aid in support of the Fourth Plan is matched by another Rs. 21,900 crore or so of our own resources. Thus foreign aid will supplement domestic savings only to the extent of 8 per cent in the Fourth Plan. This is a significant reduction from the 25 per cent in the Third Plan.

We are also anxious to give full and free play to Indian scientific and technological talent. This question is constantly before us. I know there are Members in this House who take a special interest in this matter and I have also been trying to see in what ways we could remove the difficulties which face our young scientists. Only yesterday I was conferring with some of them and I know that Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao is also giving serious thought to this matter and is having a number of meetings in this connection. We feel that our scientists and technical people are among our most valuable Plan resources and we have reason to be proud of their achievements. We should try and use their talent and capacity to the full. Self-reliance is necessarily linked with self-sufficiency in food production. The present trends also point to the possibility of self-sufficiency in the Plan period. Agricultural production is poised for a break-through. In fact, our experts and outside experts tell us that a break-through in wheat has been substantially achieved. Research on rice, which is the most important cereal crop, is also being intensified. Our farmers are responsive to new ideas and new techniques to an extent which was not visible before.

Investments in rural education and the infrastructure in rural areas are now beginning to be felt and to pay off. The Plan lays increased emphasis on agriculture and related sectors. Nearly a third of the total outlay in the public sector in the Fourth Plan has a bearing on

agricultural development. The Plan also recognises the overriding importance of rural areas in our economy and pays special attention to the fulfilment of the needs of rural areas in such fields as water supply, roads and electricity. A quick estimate has shown that 40 per cent of the outlay will directly benefit rural areas, exclusive of the investments and programmes which benefit the national economy as a whole, and in which it is difficult to apportion what part of it goes to urban areas and what part to rural areas.

A matter which has been of deep concern to the Members of the House and to all of us is the question of imbalances in regional development and, therefore, we have to take care to see that the benefits accruing from increased agricultural and industrial production are as widely dispersed as possible. Imbalances in the development of different States and regions must be rectified as soon as possible and that is why it is necessary for the Government to have positive intervention to counteract the operation of natural economic forces. It is proposed to initiate an action-programme comprising a package of measure aimed at redressing regional imbalances on the basis of the Wanchoo Committee's Report, soon after the Chief Ministers have expressed their views on this Report. This Committee, as hon. Members know, was to look into the whole question of regional imbalances and say what concessions should be given through central financial institutions, what incentives for industries in the rural areas and what disincentives to industries in the metropolitan areas should be given. The objective is to give every part of this large Union the feeling that it gets a fair deal and that it has a sense of involvement and commitment to the Plan, because any country's strength cannot be more than that of its weakest link. It must be our endeavour to give special assistance to areas which have lagged behind due to historical and other reasons and also to those sections of the people who have been under-privileged as these brothers and sisters of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. I am fully aware that it is not possible in the period of one Plan to make any substantial difference, but certainly a big step forward can be taken and that is what this Plan attempts to do.

The other question which is of great concern and the foremost and most important problem which confronts us is that of unemployment. Government fully shares the concern which is expressed here and outside and we are most anxious to find not only immediate, but also a long-term answer. This problem is two-fold *viz.*, the problem of unemployment in the rural areas and the problem of the educated unemployed, especially engineers and technical personnel. A Committee of Experts is engaged in examining certain aspects under the Chairmanship of Prof. Dantewala and Prof. Raj and Prof. Lahiri as Members. Various other suggestions made by hon. Members in the House and outside are being closely and carefully examined and everything possible will be done, but here also sometimes misconceptions arise. The unemployment problem really does not admit of a separate solution outside the Plan for the overall development of the national economy. In a sense, one of the objectives of the Plan is to provide employment in every sector and inevitably the sizable investment into the agricultural, industrial and other sectors will provide employment in various forms, direct and indirect.

Another misconception which is often put forward, is that there has been no growth of employment opportunities in these last few years. Now, it is true that the problem of a growing labour force and a still widening gap between it and available job opportunities

is a real one, but it is not correct to say that there has been no growth in employment opportunities. In the Third Plan period the average annual growth rate of employment opportunities was 6.8 per cent. Employment in the organised sector increased from 12.1 million at the end of 1960-61 to 16.2 million at the end of 1965-66. If we look at the figure sector-wise, indicating the rise in job opportunities in certain sectors between 1961 and 1968, it is as follows : In trade and commerce by 112 per cent; in power and supplies by 53.8 per cent; in the manufacturing sector 31 per cent; in agriculture and related sectors 29.4 per cent. In the public sector alone it rose between 1961 and 1968 from 5.2 million in 1956 to nearly twice that figure *i.e.* 9.8 million last year. Now I do not want at all to suggest that this problem is not serious or important or minimise it, but we must look at this problem, as at other problems, in their perspective. In the long run the answer does lie in a faster and self-sustaining growth of our economy and that precisely is the underlying objective of the Plan.

On the question of unemployment most people are agreed, but the point of controversy is that of the public sector. The public sector will play a key role in the fulfilment of the objectives which we have in view. It aims at a reduction of income and regional disparities and substantial investments in these undertakings have given the public sector a commanding role in certain lines of production, i.e., steel, heavy engineering, electrical equipment, fertiliser, etc. An efficient and expanding public sector is the only effective answer to the problems of monopoly and concentration of economic power in the private sector, which we are committed to deal with. Now, the public sector has come in for a great deal of criticism. It is constantly in public view and therefore all its deficiencies and shortfalls are immediately visible and exposed while a similar deficiency in the private sector escapes notice. A number of units in the public sector such as Indian Oil, Oil and Natural Gas Commission, Fertiliser Corporation, etc., have done well, and their achievements deserve to be more widely known. The public sector has also now begun to make a significant contribution to our export effort. Of course we are fully conscious that in some other areas it is not doing so well. We know the causes. These have been studied and pointed out to us and we are making every attempt to see how we can improve the performance and make up for the time lost.

The aim of this Plan is to improve the efficiency of the public sector enterprises so as to generate larger resources for the expansion of social services such as education, medical relief and public health, which alone can concretise the benefits of the Plan for the common man and give substance to our conception of a more egalitarian society in which the needs of the under-privileged sections are met in a more ample measure than has been so far.

Madam, I commend the Plan to the consideration of the House not because I think it provides all the answers to all our problems but because I am convinced that it will take us forward nearer to our goal of self-reliance. But even self-reliance is not the ultimate goal. It is our target for the coming decade. Beyond self-reliance there are so many other things to be done before poverty can be really conquered and our people, the poorest and the weakest of them, can be assured of a proper place in the sun. No single Plan, no single programme can achieve this. It involves long and hard work. I think hon. Members are aware that the path to prosperity is not a magic carpet journey and also that in the last few

years we have faced specially difficult situations. Some people are apt to speak of it lightly and say that we blame everything on the drought or everything on the fighting on our borders, but these were exceptional and unprecedented events which could not have been foreseen in any measure and they really set us back a great deal, but in spite of that we have made headway. One of the points which is constantly being put is—I have replied to this point in House but I would like to say again—this question of plan holiday. As I said earlier, neither planning nor progress came to a halt during these year while we had the Annual Plans because these Annual Plans witnessed appreciable progress in several fields such as agricultural production, major irrigation, power generation etc. They also took us some steps forward in the direction in which we wished to go. Now we have to continue on this journey building our road. We have nobody to show the road to us. In fact there is no road. We have to make the road as we go along breaking stones, removing obstacles and making the journey perhaps a little easier for those who will follow behind us. I am not going into all details just now, Madam Deputy Chairman, because I think after the Members have had an opportunity of expressing their views, then I will be able to deal with the points which they raise.

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*Madam Deputy Chairman, most of the substitute motions, in fact practically all the substitute motions which have been moved are in the name of Mr. Bhupesh Gupta who is now walking out of the Chamber.

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It does not matter at all**. (*Interruptions*) Anyway, perhaps he does not want to hear any refutation of the views he has placed before the House.

There are some others, but 103 are in the name of Mr. Bhupesh Gupta. About six or so are in the name of Dr. Bhai Mahavir and one in the name of Mrs. Paranjpye.

Now, one of the important points which Mr. Bhupesh Gupta made and which was also stressed by other Members was the question of the so-called Plan holiday. I had thought that I had spoken on this at great length on previous occasions, but since it has been raised, I would like to put the fact before the hon. Members which is that there was no Plan holiday. It is true that the Fourth Five-Year Plan has begun only on the 1st April of this year, but in the interim period, we had three annual Plans which were taking us forward from the Third Plan towards the Fourth Plan. This was not a period of resting or falling back, but on the contrary a period in which we advanced further. Our pace of development during these years was accelerated in some sectors of high priority. For instance while the expenditure in Agriculture and allied sectors was Rs. 1,089 crore in the Third Plan, it aggregated to about Rs. 1,167 crore in the period 1967-69. Similarly programmes relating to Minor Irrigation in particular were increased; the outlay on Minor Irrigation was Rs. 314 crore

* Replying to the debate on the Motion regarding the Draft Fourth Five-Year Plan, *R.S. Deb.*, 15 May, 1969, cc. 3161–80.

** The Deputy Chairman, intervened to say, "He is coming back".

during the three years as against Rs. 270 crore in the Third Plan. In the Fisheries sector, the amount in the Third Plan was Rs. 22.5 crore, whereas during these three annual Plans, it went up to Rs. 37 crore. In terms of physical targets under several heads, the increase in production of foodgrains from 72 million tonnes in 1965-66 to an estimated 98 million tonnes has been greatly publicised. About 8.5 million hectares were brought under high-yielding variety in the last three years. This period also witnessed an upsurge in the consumption of fertilisers. There was increase in the utilisation of power. We had only about 5,13,000 pump-sets in the Third Plan, but by the end of 1968, this had risen to over one million. In all aspects, Madam, during this period there was no holiday but a steady advance towards the goals which we have set ourselves.

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In the public sector also an investment of Rs. 1,575 crore was made in the field of industry and minerals as against Rs. 1,726 crore in the whole five-year period of the Third Plan. I have just given these figures to show that there was no plan holiday but that we made a notable advance.

Now, Madam, on a debate like this we usually have opposing points of view. But on some points hon. Members from the opposing parties get together and one of these points seems to be the question of foreign aid. The spokesmen of the Swatantra Party as well as the Jana Sangh have referred to the dependence of our Plans on foreign aid. I did make a mention of this in my opening remarks, but I think I can repeat that in the world of today there is hardly any country which does not receive aid in one form or another. There is in our world much greater interdependence between nations and much greater working together. As far as India is concerned, we have received aid from friendly countries and from international financing institutions. But if you look at the figure in absolute terms it seems large because the country is large but the figure is low in *per capita* terms, in fact, far lower than what many other countries such as Pakistan or Latin American countries or many countries in Africa, have received. And foreign aid has not supplanted our efforts. That is not the main base on which our efforts are made. It is only supplementing our own massive efforts at the mobilisation of domestic resources for development.

Net foreign aid will constitute only 8 per cent of the investment aimed at in the Fourth Plan.* It is true that it was greater earlier on, but as I said in my opening remarks, we are making a tremendous effort to try and stand on our own feet. Obviously you cannot do it at one stroke. You cannot say, "We were getting all this and suddenly we will not get it." We are making our efforts, and there is a big difference—from 45 per cent down to 8 per cent of the investment. The Swantantra Party, which deprecates dependence on foreign aid, on the other hand, looks with favour at the inflow of foreign private capital. While we have welcomed foreign private capital in selective fields, we prefer Government to Government aid as it is less onerous and gives us greater flexibility in its utilisation in our plan programmes.

* Responding to Shri A.P. Chaterjee's remark, "Is this foreign aid not 45 percent of our entire public debt."

Now, there is a great deal of talk about the rescheduling of debt also and one hon. Member said that we should hang our head in shame, and similar other dramatic pronouncements were made. Madam, this again is a question which is common to practically every country, not only to the so-called poor and developing countries but even to most of the developed and affluent countries. There are very very few countries which can say that they have satisfactory balance of payments and which are not trying for a rescheduling or resettlement of debts in one form or another. In the initial stages of our foreign aid programme the terms of some of the loans given to us were comparatively onerous both in regard to the rate of interest and the period of repayment. But today there is a greater awareness that aid should be given on soft terms. And it is in line with this present thinking that it is sought to make these past loans less onerous and one way of achieving this objective is rescheduling. While a significant part of foreign aid is tied, repayment is not tied in this manner and has to be effected out of the free foreign exchange resources of the free foreign exchange resources of the borrowing countries. So, by releasing free foreign exchange resources rescheduling to some extent corrects this asymmetry in aid programme. Rescheduling is only one form of providing additional foreign aid and it is today recognised as such by the financial institutions and the aid-giving countries. So, in a way this rescheduling is more valuable to the receiving countries than fresh aid in the sense that the resources saved can be utilised elsewhere in the best interests of the country whereas receipts from fresh foreign aid will in most cases have to be utilised for procuring goods from the creditor countries concerned. As I said, Madam, there are very few countries which do not find it necessary to seek relief in some form or the other from countries which are in a surplus position.

Then, the hon. Member Shri Dahyabhai Patel criticised resort to deficit financing as one of the main contributing factors to rising prices. Normally nobody likes to resort to deficit financing. But the estimate of Rs. 850 crores made in the Fourth Plan has been arrived at in the light of the anticipated growth in national income, the need for further activation of the economy and other relevant factors. At this stage it does seem that this deficit financing of the order indicated in the Plan will not exert any upward pressure in prices. The actual amount of deficit financing will, however, be determined carefully with reference to the trends in production and other factors from time to time. I might also mention that despite deficit financing of about Rs. 260 crore during 1968-69, this did not create any great pressure on prices.

A subject that is of interest to the whole country and which is more particularly taken up in this House is the question of monopolies. Madam, hon. Members know that two paths have normally been followed by most countries of the world with regard to development. One is the path of complete control and regimentation. The other is the path of giving complete freedom to market forces. We all know the difficulties which have been experienced in following both these paths. Where there has been this regimentation and full control the path has not been easy. It has put a tremendous hardship on the people of that country. Similarly where the other path has been followed there has been a different type of hardship. That is, in some way it has taken longer to solve the problem, the question of poverty has been longer and also greater inequality has been prevalent. So, we have

very consciously tried to choose a path which is between these two paths to some extent. We, therefore, have the weaknesses of both as well as the strength of both. One of our difficulties is that we have to function, and not have to, but we have consciously chosen the path of persuasion rather than coercion of trying to take as many of the people with us as possible, the path of democracy. That by itself, although I believe it is the best path, it is the path which strengthens our people as a whole, does create its own difficulties. So, we find that trends towards growth in the size of individual units and industrial groups are somewhat inevitable under the normal operation of economic forces in an economy, which does leave a considerable area for private initiative and enterprise. The increasing sophistication of our industries, economies of scale and natural accretion of resources through depreciation and other reserves and the plough-back of profits, all these factors have given the bigger industrial houses which are already in the field an edge over new entrants in regard to access to capital, indigenous and foreign know–how and so on. Now, we recognise that this situation of monopoly has arisen in certain fields. What we do now is to see, that, having arisen, how we now control the situation. And we have initiated various corrective actions to regulate monopolies, in the public interest. This action has taken various forms, progressive taxation of incomes and wealth and the expanding role of the public sector in crucial sectors of the economy. The Fourth Plan also does not ignore the problem of monopolies. On the contrary, it has suggested a series of inter-related measures which, if implemented vigorously, will make a definite impact in curbing the power of incipient monopolies and mitigate the concentration of economic power. Now these things are mentioned in the Draft Plan document, but I would like to repeat. A new industrial licence should be given to an industrial house only after assessing its performance in relation to earlier licences. Big industrial houses should not be permitted to set up new units in relatively common industries, such as for the production of consumer goods. Credit policies of financial institutions should be reorientated so that an unduly large proportion of financial resources is not directed to the large industrial houses. In the case of industrial houses it would be desirable to stipulate that their own contribution in a project should be proportionately higher compared to medium-scale or new entrepreneurs. The Plan document further proposes that where financial institutions including the LIC have a substantial share-holding in a company, they may exercise their full rights including the appointment of representatives on the board of directors, and hon. Members know that the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Bill is now before Parliament. The control which big industrialists were exercising over policies of the commercial banks through their domination in the board of directors has been considerably reduced now, and specific directives have been given to banks to see that credit is made available in a larger measure for the three priority sectors, that is, exports, small scale industries and agriculture. Naturally, we must keep a continuous watch to see how these steps–the steps which have already been taken–work out in practice before we decide whether any further measures are necessary to ensure that all these banks and other financial institutions function in active furtherance of our social objectives.

The Draft Plan emphasises that there should be a progressive reduction of disparities in incomes and wealth and that to this end the benefits of development should accrue more and more to the relatively less privileged classes of society. I think it has also mentioned

that the existing scheme of taxation should be made more effective by bringing all taxable income and wealth into the tax net. But in a country like ours the realisation of egalitarian objectives will depend not so much on the appropriation of the wealth of a few as on the enlargement of the earnings of the relatively poorer sections of our society. We can raise the income and consumption of the bulk of our population only if we can bring about a very big increase in the total national product. And that is why economic growth is a prerequisite for the promotion of greater equality.

The Plan lays emphasis on research in dry farming areas and it embodies programmes which will make small farms more viable through the provision of facilities for production, for credit, for marketing on a co-operative basis, and also it calls for land reform measures so that the elements of exploitation and social injustice in our agrarian system can be eliminated.

We are all aware that the every stability, not only the economic development but the very stability of the country depends on the lessening of the tensions which come about through these disparities, and therefore we are most anxious about special programmes for all the weaker sections–our brothers and sisters of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been mentioned and a very large number of those who are landless–and that is why in all our programmes we keep them in view. Hon. Members of course represent all sections. But quite often we see that there is the promotion of emphasis on the needs of one particular group. But I think that at all times we must first think of these weaker sections and how any programme will effect their advancement. But at the same time as I said, we cannot help these weaker groups unless the base of the country rises and the general level of production rises and mobilisation of resources is improved. Now we believe, contrary to what some of our hon. friends opposite of the Swatantra Party believe, that an expanding and efficient public sector can provide an effective check against the growth of inequalities of income and wealth in a developing economy. And therefore our Plans have assigned an important place to investment in the public sector in the fields of organised industries and of mining.

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In the Fourth Plan investments in the public sector will constitute 60 per cent of the total investment in organised industry and mining as against 41 per cent for the private sector. The relative position of public versus private sector will not be altered to the detriment of public sector by the pattern of investment envisaged. Many Members have referred to the fact that the allocation to the private sector has been increased to Rs. 10,000 crore in the Fourth Plan as against Rs. 14,400 crore in the public sector. But a great deal of these investments in the private sector will be by small farmers and small entrepreneurs, and I do not think we can say that these investments will strengthen capitalist forces.

I am sorry I was led astray by my hon. friend's interruption earlier on when we were tailing about foreign aid. Even in the Third Plan the net foreign aid was 25 per cent and not 45 per cent....

Even in the Second Plan–I do not have the exact figure–even there it was less than 45 per cent*.

The hon. Member just now spoke about the efficiency of the public sector. Now this is a much beaten horse, if I may put it that way. There is no doubt that there are enterprises in the public sector which are not working as they should. We have all gone into the reasons. In some cases the improvement has begun. In some cases all the steps which should have been taken have not been taken. But we are fully seized of the situation and we are taking every step that we can to see that these improvements take place. Now earlier on in another discussion I had said something like that the aim of these public sector enterprises is not merely to gain profits. I did not by that mean at all that we should not make every possible effort to get profits or to make them work efficiently, but only that by their very nature some of the items which they produce cannot give a profit immediately. This takes time, but this does not mean that we should not move every nerve to see that this improves. It is true that because we had started some of these projects for the first time on this scale, some mistakes were made. For instance, there are enterprises where too many people are employed, but because of the whole system and our laws it is not possible to remove anybody from there. So we do face these difficulties. But there do exist a large number of public sector enterprises which are making a profit also. And when we look at the public sector, we should look at the whole picture and not just take out those that are not working as well as they should.

One of the substitute Motions deals with the question of reorganising trade. The State is already playing an increasingly important role in import and export. Through the Food Corporation it is also fast acquiring a commanding role in the procurement and distribution of foodgrains. State trading in imports has made considerable progress. The share of the STC and the MMTC in total imports is estimated to have risen from 4.9 per cent in 1966-67 to 7.3 per cent in 1967-68. In fact as regards imports, large part of the economy's requirements of food, fertiliser, equipment for Government projects and other stores and purchases abroad are directly negotiated by Government and so can be deemed to be outside the private sector. In the imports made during 1966-67 and 1967-68 such purchases even after excluding the imports made by the STC and the MMTC, accounted for somewhat more than half the value of our imports.

As regards exports those made by the public sector represent a further expansion of State agencies. Between 1966-67 and 1967-68 the share of the STC, MMTC and public sector enterprises in exports rose from 10 to 15 per cent and we exported goods worth Rs. 116 crore and Rs. 179 crore respectively during 1966-67 and 1967-68. According to the balance of payments information direct imports by the Government in these years 1966-67 and 1967-68 amounted to Rs. 1,146 and Rs. 1,258 crore and accounted for 61 and 62 per cent approximately of all imports during these two years.

Similarly in the food trade the Food Corporation of India procured in 1961 0.54 million tonnes but in 1967 this went up to 4.47 million tonnes and in 1968 it went up to 6.6 million

* Responding to Shri A.P. Chatterjee's Question, "What is the present provision?"

tonnes. Public procurement in 1967 and 1968 accounted for about a fifth of the marketable surplus of foodgrains in the country. During the years of scarcity public distribution of foodgrains amounted to as much as half the marketable surplus of the foodgrains in the country. We have to remember that much as we desire to eliminate the middle men we do not yet have the necessary skills but we are trying to acquire them.

Now some hon. Members including Shri Krishan Kant referred to the need for making a larger provision for education. The provision made in the Fourth Plan is Rs. 802 crore. This is exclusive of the non-Plan expenditure which is estimated at about Rs. 550 crore every year. Then there is contribution from non–Government sources which would amount to about Rs. 150 crore every year. The second educational survey completed in 1965 showed that 87.23 per cent of the rural habitations were now served by primary school and it is estimated that by the end of the Fourth Plan 85 per cent of the children in the age group of 6-11 will get the facility of primary education. I am fully aware that we have not been able to keep up to the target which we had envisaged earlier on right in the beginning but nevertheless this is a sizable increase.

Shrimati Shakuntala Paranjpye has suggested that some of the money allotted for family planning should be diverted to education but I think that even where it is used for family planning it is education and certainly if all these programmes are better co-ordinated they could go much further. Of course I see Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao smiling critically, I entirely sympathise with him and with other Ministers who feel that their allotments have been drastically, cut, in fact cut to the bone but as the hon. House is aware it is something which is hardly in our hands because of the lack of resources.

Another point which was made by one of the hon. Members I think was connected with correlation between national laboratories and national undertakings. I am fully aware that this has not been satisfactory but I can assure hon. Members that only yesterday and two days before we have had meetings in the CSIR and we are going very thoroughly into these matters and trying to see how these gaps can be bridged and how all these people, the Directors of the laboratories, the people in the industry, the people in the public sector and also all the other people concerned can be set to working together so that it is not dependent on the occasional meetings are held but there is constant dialogue and exchange of views so that we know the situation in the country at any given moment, what the needs are, what the supply is of know-how, personnel, what progress is made of the pilot projects, the position about equipment and that sort of thing, so that the functioning can be much more efficient in all sectors of industry as well as agriculture.

Then there is the question of indebtedness of States and the demand for larger resources for the States. It seems strange to me that this matter should be taken up by a person like Shri Bhupesh Gupta, who normally one would have thought would expound the concept of democratic centralism which stands for larger resources and powers for the Centre rather than for the units.

*** *** ***

This is how we have seen this system working in other places.*

*** *** ***

Madam Deputy Chairman, we know that Mr. Bhupesh Gupta took a fair amount of time yesterday. I was not in the House but I heard a large portion of his speech in my room. Every now and then I heard him say that he was finishing in one minute but after 10 minutes he was still speaking. I think he should spare a little time for me now and I will try to meet his point.

*** *** ***

The States are facing the same difficulties which I mentioned earlier and which our Central Ministers are facing, that is, cut in many of their programmes but none of these programmes can be taken up unless the basic structure is strengthened. We want to look at all Central programmes with a magnifying glass, if necessary, to see what could be pruned and what could be cut. In fact I have given this assurance in the National Development Council. We must remember that many of the assets which the States are building up such as irrigation, power and so on are made with borrowed funds from the Centre and most of the projects which are with the Centre are projects which benefit the States. They do not belong to the Centre they belong to the States....

*** *** ***

Does the hon. Member want to close any railway line or say there should not be development of the railways?** They may not be run by the States but certainly they are for the benefit of the people who live in the States.

*** *** ***

So I feel that instead of wrangling over the problem of readjustment of debt obligations we can more fruitfully concentrate our united efforts on increasing the profitability of industrial undertakings, irrigation and power projects and I think in this Shri Bhupesh Gupta could perhaps take a direct interest and help us.

*** *** ***

I am not at all talking about States' debts.*** I am talking about making a united effort for increasing the profitability of industrial undertakings in all the States.

*** *** ***

It may be easy for you; it may be easy just to draw a line on paper but it is not so easy if you see the consequences of it to the Centre and to the States.**** As I have just said,

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* Responding to Shri Bhupesh Gupta's remark, "This is your definition, not mine."

** Responding to Shri Bhupesh Gupta's remark, "I hope you won't say the Railways run through the States."

*** Replying to Shri Bhupesh Gupta's observation, "Let us sit together and write off some of the States' debts. Are you ready?"

**** Replying to Shri Bhupesh Gupta who said, "Writing off is very easy."

we are aware of the need to provide a certain measure of relief to the States and the Finance Ministry, along with the Planning Commission, are seized of this problem and they will finalise their proposals after we have the Finance Commission's Report.

*** *** ***

Now, the States' share of the Central resources has been constantly increasing. *In 1968-69, the share of the Central taxes and statutory grants together made available to the States was 750 crore as against about Rs. 1160 crore of their own tax revenue. So, the Centre is vitally interested in assisting the development programmes of the States and will certainly try to meet the needs of the States to the fullest extent possible within the available resources. Nearly half the total public sector plants falls within the competence of the State Governments and the new procedures, which we have adopted, give the States a far greater freedom and flexibility in tailoring their programmes to fit their own specific needs and conditions. The Plan is a national Plan which calls for a co-operative effort by the Centre and the States.

*** *** ***

I come to the very important subject of unemployment. The hon. Member and in fact, all sections of this House have raised this question from time to time and it is just now before us in a very vivid way because of the demonstrations taking place outside. Now, Madam, I have met some of these young people who had come two or three years ago belonging to one party and yesterday I met some belonging to Shri Bhupesh Gupta's party and other parties also...

*** *** ***

Well, all right, the All-India Students' Federation, the Bharat Samajwadhi Yuvak Sangh and so on. **Now, I sincerely hope that no occasion will arise for the students to come into conflict with the police. I am consistently stressing the fact that our police must act as friends of the people and not be a force that will threaten or alarm the people...

*** *** ***

Mr. Bhupesh Gupta, please, let us agree on this that the police should not provoke the students, but equally the students and young people should not provoke the police.

*** *** ***

Now, Madam, much as I would like to give specific measures for dealing with this question, as I told the young people, who had come to meet me, in the long range unemployment can be met only by greater development, both on the agricultural front and on the industrial front. This is the only way, but I do agree that the problem is such a serious one today that it should be studied in depth. In fact, there are committees studying it and

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* Responding to Shri Bhupesh Gupta's intervention, "The debts of the States to the Centre are Rs. 5,000 crore".

** Responding to Shri Bhupesh Gupta's intervention, "No. no. It is the All-India Students Federation."

all the Ministries are giving it very serious thought as to how we can produce some schemes, even though they may not be able to deal with all the unemployed, at least as a token to see how some of them can be given some kind of temporary employment, which would help to tide them over this period. Now, one of the memoranda given to me yesterday was an exceedingly long one. We will certainly go into all the aspects because it deals with all kinds of things, with foreign policy and so on, but the memorandum given the other day dealt with questions such as the land army. Now, as I said to them and as I would like to repeat...

*** *** ***

The concept of a land army is very attractive. Also, some of the other suggestions which are given, on the face of them seem to be good, but all these things have to be gone into from the point of view of practicability. How will they work ? Do we have the necessary organisation, the necessary discipline and so on ? I can assure hon. Members that these matters will be looked into and if they have any more suggestions, we are willing to look into them.

*** *** ***

Special or normal, I do not think that makes much difference, as long as the suggestions are made and we can go into them.* But certainly our young people, whether they are the rural youth, whether they are the educated, technical or scientific youth, they are the best resources we have and I fully agree with hon. Members that these resources should not be wasted, nor should these young people be allowed to feel frustrated because as we and they have a stake in the future of the country, the country has a stake in their future too.

Now, this Plan is not really an ideal plan, but it does attempt to reflect some of our hopes and aspirations and our desire to better the lives of our people. It seeks to increase production in every crucial sector, to increase national income and national wealth, because, as I said, without more production and more national wealth, there cannot be removal of poverty or even a redistribution of national income which could narrow the gap between the rich and the poor, which is what all of us desire so earnestly. While there must be more production, there must also be, side by side with it, a more equitable distribution of national wealth and this cannot be postponed to a later date. Many examples are given here of advanced countries, but these are not really relevant to our conditions because some of these countries had centuries in which to develop. We have to telescope the process of change and progress into a smaller and meaningful span of time. We have to contend with a politically conscious people and to meet their just aspirations and rising expectations.

Now, some people have said–fortunately, I think, not in this House– "reject the Plan" but at the same time, the same people have gone on to say that such and such thing has to be added to this Plan. This is not a very logical way of looking at the Plan. This Plan, with all its faults, has started under better auspices than our previous Plans. We have certainly got rid of certain shortages which were plaguing our progress earlier, but I would like to emphasise, again and again, that no plan of development, no path to progress can

* Responding to Shri Bhupesh Gupta's demand, "Call a special meeting to discuss this problem only."

be easy. It has not been easy in any country and in our conditions it is going to be specially difficult. The battle of poverty is a far more difficult battle to fight than a battle with arms and weapons and...

*** *** ***

Even more difficult than the battle of freedom, because by itself the inspiration of freedom buoys up the people and gives them enthusiasm, whereas development does not mean just one push. It means a very difficult, slow, step-by-step journey. While one can sacrifice anything in a spurt of enthusiasm day-to-day routine, labour is certainly more difficult. We have found this in all countries. In a country, for instance, which was involved during the Second World War, I saw that people were willing to give up everything. They were willing to live without adequate food, without light, without everything, but the day peace was declared, they were not willing to do the same even though they still needed the discipline to build the country after the war, but they felt, "It is now peace time, why should we put up with these restrictions ?" It is the same here. The freedom fight does involve everybody in a different type of way. What we have to understand is that this is still a freedom fight because this is a fight to consolidate our freedom and to give the kind of development, the kind of equality which will strengthen the country as a whole. This can only be done if it is not the government alone or the Planning Commission alone which is expected to find a magical solution to all problems. But of course we have to mobilise the entire nation to hard and sustained work and an understanding of the difficulties. So, when I commend this Plan to this hon. House, I would like to invite the hon. Members and in fact the entire nation to join us in this exciting, though hard, battle for the good and the advancement of the entire people of this country.

Thank you.

Bank Nationalisation*

Madam Deputy Chairman...Madam, an Ordinance was promulgated the day before yesterday, nationalising fourteen of the major commercial banks incorporated in India. With your permission, I should like to share with the House the considerations which weighed with Government in taking this momentous decision and the spirit in which they propose to implement it.

Nearly fifteen years ago, Parliament approved that we should set before ourselves the goal of a socialist pattern of society. Since then, Government have taken several measures towards the achievement of this goal. Public ownership and the control of the commanding heights of national economy and of its strategic sectors, are essential and important aspects of the new social order which we are trying to build in this country. We regard this as particularly necessary in a poor country which seeks to achieve speedy economic progress, consistent with social justice, in a democratic political system—one which is free from the domination of a few, and in which opportunities are open to all.

Financial institutions are among the most important levers that any society has at its command, for the achievement of its social and economic objectives. It is in recognition of this fact that we nationalized life insurance business and the then Imperial Bank of India over a decade ago. Since then, we have also, set up in the public sector, other institutions for the provision of medium or long-term finance to industry and agriculture. The nationalisation of major banks is a significant step in this process of public control over the principal institutions for the mobilisation of people's savings and canalising them towards productive purposes.

After the serious difficulties which we have had to encounter in recent years our economy in once again poised for fresh growth and development. There has been a notable breakthrough on the agricultural front, technologically and otherwise. The increase in our exports has been impressive. There has been substantial progress in the matter of power supply and the development of transport, as also the availability of trained manpower. Our industrial base has been strengthened and diversified. It is in this context that we launched the Fourth Plan earlier this year with confidence and determination.

The question which has been engaging our attention for some time is how best to impart an element of dynamism and new vigour into the process of our development so that the targets of the Fourth Plan, in the public and private sectors, cannot only be fulfilled but if

* Making a Statement regarding the Nationalisation of Banks, *R.S. Deb.*, 21 July, 1969, cc. 196-222.

possible, exceeded. Our major concern has been to accelerate the tempo of investment and production, so as to improve living standard and increase employment opportunities, consistent with our determination to achieve self-reliance. It is necessary to mobilise the savings of the people to the largest possible extent and to utilise them for productive purpose in accordance with our plans and priorities. Government believe that public ownership of the major banks, for which there has been widespread public support, will help in the most effective mobilisation and deployment of national resources, so that our objectives can be realised with a greater degree of assurance.

The Ordinance promulgated by Government provides for the nationalisation of all scheduled banks, incorporated in India, which had minimum deposits of not less than Rs. 50 crore st the end of June last. The fourteen banks in this category, together with the State Bank of India and its subsidiaries which already operate under public ownership, account for more than 85 per cent of bank deposits in this country. The House will appreciate that in view of the very nature of the measure, and also to forestall any possibility of manipulations which may not be in the public interest, it was essential to make a swift and sudden move which could only be achieved through an Ordinance. The fact that speculation about Government's intentions had assumed an acute phase in the last few days rendered it all the more necessary to act without any further loss of time, and in anticipation of the approval of Parliament, which will be sought through a Bill which Government propose to bring during the current session.

So far as foreign banks are concerned they provide, by and large, business of a specialied nature such as facilitating foreign trade and tourism. The operation of banks of one country in another, subject to the laws of the land, is mainly for such purposes and is part of an international facility. Our Indian banks also maintain their branches in many countries. It has been Government's general policy to confine the opening of new branches of foreign banks to major port towns where their specialised services are needed. Having regard to all these factors, Government have decided to exclude branches of foreign banks incorporated outside India from the purview of the Ordinance.

As I stated the other day, his is not the beginning of a new era of nationalisation. Whatever the pattern of the economy, it is widely recognised that the operations of the banking system should be informed by a larger social purpose, and should be subject to close public regualation. Government have come to the conclusion that the desired regulation and the rate of progress consistent with the urgency of our problems could be secured only through nationalisation.

I should like to reiterate my assurance that even after nationalisation, the legitimate credit needs of private industry and trade, big or small, will be met. Indeed, it shall be our endeavour to ensure that the needs of productive sectors of the economy, and in particular those of farmers, small-scale industrialists and self-employed professional groups are met in an increasing measure. It will be one of the positive objectives of nationalised banks to actively foster the growth of new and progressive entrepreneurs, and to create fresh opportunities for hitherto neglected and backward areas in different parts of the country. The banks will now be better placed to serve the farmer and to promote agricultural

production and rural development generally. Public ownership will also help to curb the use of bank credit for speculative and other unproductive purpose. By severing the link between the major banks and the bigger industrial groups which have so far controlled them, Government believe that the step they have taken will also bring about the right atmosphere for the development of adequate professional management in the banking field. Government attach the utmost importance to modern managerial techniques and practices.

The moneys which depositors entrust to the banks are in the nature of a sacred trust. The interests of the depositors of the banks which have been nationalised, will not only continue to be fully safeguarded but will now have the backing of the State itself. I should also make it clear that the emphasis on priority areas, new entrepreneurs and relatively backward areas, will not be at the expense of considerations of economic viability. Only thus can we fulfil our obligations to those who have entrusted their savings to us for the benefit of the community. But economic viability can still admit of much greater resourcefulness in lending to priority areas than has been in case so far. The general public already has the experience of the State Bank to show how public purpose and security, as well as good return to depositors, can be combined.

The Ordinance has also provided for the adequate protection of the interests of employees of the banks concerned. They have now become employees of a publicly owned and socially responsible banking system. This also places on them special responsibility towards the community. The success of the programme of nationalisation will, in a large measure, depend upon the efficiency, the devotion and the dedication with which they perform their daily tasks, and the courtesy and consideration with which they treat the constituents of the bank. I hope that all individual employees of these banks and their associations will now help in the successful implementation of the step which has been taken.

The Ordinance provides for a scheme of fair compensation for the take-over in accordance with a formula which Parliament approved recently, while enacting the Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 1968. The Ordinance provides that compensation will be payable in the form of Government securities.

In order to cause the least possible dislocation in the working of the banks covered by the Ordinance, and to avoid inconvenience to the public, it is proposed for the present, to retain the identity of each bank in the form of a new corporation. The Chief Executive of each bank is now the custodian of the unit concerned on behalf of the Central Government, and will be subject to its control and direction. The old Board of Directors in each case stands dissolved, and the Ordinance vests the Government with the power to set up Advisory Boards in their place. These are interim measures. Change in the structure of management may also be necessary; these will be undertaken after the most careful consideration. The Ordinance provides for such changes to be made.

As in other matters of policy, Government have been guided in taking the present decision entirely by national interests, and the needs and aspirations of our people. The establishment of a socialist society is one of our declared goals, but we have not been guided by any doctrinaire considerations. Our sole concern has been to accelerate

development and thus make a significant impact on the problems of poverty and unemployment, and to bring about progressive reduction of disparities between the rich and the poor sections of our people, and between the relatively advanced and backward areas of our country.

I realise that the test of the decision is in its effective implementation. Government are determined to take all possible steps to make this measure a success.

I should like to take this opportunity to appeal to all sections of this House to extend their valuable cooperation in the purposeful implementation of this important measure.

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Madam Deputy Chairman, I can only say that this is a slur,* not on me, but on the great Indian people themselves because this demand has been made not a few days back but for many years from all sections, practically from all the Indian people, from all parts of this very vast country, and if anybody dares to say that these people are guided by somebody who live outside, I think that this is a slur also on Parliament, because the country is governed through Parliament.

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I think all these things can be discussed when the Bill comes forward**. Howerver, I would like to say that the performance of the State Bank has certainly been better than the other banks. I do not have the full details but they are available for the public in various reports and so on.

As far as the Morarka Committee report is concerned, it had come just two months ago. It is under consideration of the Government. It is true that they have spoken about expenses. We are looking into it. We will see what can be done about this matter.

The hon. Members has poken about the word 'illegitimate'. I have, in the course of my statement, also mentioned about speculation and use of money for unproductive purposes. It is not a question of anything being illegitimate. But the money could have been beter used. That was the whole purpose of the measure of nationalisation. Obviously if I thought that it was not a good measure, I would not have taken the trouble to adopt it.

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The answer is self-evident.*** We think that our purpose is served by nationalising the banks which have been nationalised. The whole purpose of nationalisaion, as I have

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* Shri Anant Prasad Sharma had earlier drawn the attention of the House to "a very objectionable remark" made regarding the nationalisation of banks in one of the daily newspapers. He read out relevant paragraphs from an article in the newspaper in which *inter alia* was written : "Some times one wonders whether Indira is ruled from New Delhi or Moscow".

** Replying to the points raised by Shri Lokanath Misra who *inter alia* said, "The Prime Minister during her speech said that all legitimate credits would be made available to traders, big or small. Can she indicate a single instance of illegitimate accommodation being given....."

*** Replying to Shri Godey Murahari who wanted to know, "...Why she did not contemplate complete nationalisation of banks, including foreign banks....."

mentioned in the statement and on other occasions from time to time, is to implement the policies properly and to have correct policies for making credit available.

*** *** ***

The hon. Member has unfortunately not listened to the very long statement which I made and, therefore, I have to read out one paragraph all over again for which I ask to be excused by the other Members*....

I made it very clear when I read out the statement. It says :

"The fact that speculation about Government's intentions had assumed an acute phase in the last few days rendered it all the more necessary to act without any further loss of time..."

I think this is self-evident. I do not think any instability has been caused. During this period I did not have a talk with financial experts, banking experts and so on. This is the conclusion which I have come to.

As regards the power of the Reserve Bank, the Reserve Bank does have considerable powers. But obviously we thought that they were not enough for the purpose which we had in mind.

*** *** ***

Madam, this is hardly the time to go into the details of this**, but I would like to assure the hon. Member that it is certainly our intention to strive our very best to run banks in the interest of the country and in the interest of those who have so far not been able to avail of their services.

*** *** ***

The whole point of this is to help those people who have not had the facilities before*** and I made special mention of trying to reduce the disparities between different sections. I think backward communities are included in this.

*** *** ***

I know how much this House is interested in various matters which they would like enquire into, privy purses and so on****. But I think you will agree that they are hardly relevant to the statement which I have made just now. However, with regard to the other matters which the hon. Member has raised, I agree with him that it is most essential to have the right people, people with the right knowledge, efficiency as well as the right

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* Dr. Bhai Mahavir wanted to know as to why had the Government resorted to an ordinance for nationalising the banks just one day before Parliament was due to meet. Further he enquired whether the Reserve Bank of India did not have sufficient powers to guide and control the banks from the point of view of development.

** Shri Arjun Arora *inter alia* wanted to know whether the Government had applied its mind to the manner in which the banks would be run in order that they might benefit the people.

*** Shri B.D. Khobaragade asked, whether credit facilities would be available to people from the backward communities.

**** Shri Banka Behari Das enquired whether nationalisation of banks was going to be the first step for snapping the relations that existed between big business and financial institutions. He further wanted to know whether these nationalised financial institutions would be freed from the bureaucratic control.

orientation and attitude in these important posts in the banks. And it is only when we can achieve this that the banks will be able to serve the larger interests fo the country which is the whole purpose of this measure.

*** *** ***

Madam, this is indeed a significant step*, as I have said in my statement, and it can only be effective if we keep this point in view that these financial institutions must be run with a new spirit not only as far as efficiency goes but as far as social and economic outlook goes. And this was the whole purpose of this measure. It is not easy overnight to find new personnel or to make these changes. But that certainly will be my effort. And this is necessary not in financial institutions only. I may say that in many other directions we have not been able to succeed because we have not had sometimes in these institutions or at different levels the sort of orientation which is so necessary. But here again it is a question of training and it is a very complex question which we must handle.

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As far as the association of big business is concerned,** the whole purpose of the measure is to break these associations. With regard to giving of credit, it is true that before even some of our State-owned financial institutions were not giving credit to the public sector. This policy decision was taken even before this measure and we are further looking into the matter as to how this whole system can be streamlined.

It is very generous of the hon. Member to at least say that some bureaucrats are all right. As I said, it is a question of giving them the right guidance and giving them the right orientation. And I think that if all of us, whether they are bureaucrats, politicians, people who are concerned with banks, and bank employees, cooperate together to make this measure a success, we will be more successful.

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With regard to the first question I think secrecy should be maintained***. With regard to the second, those banks are also subject to general control and I do not think that there is any great danger of this plan being sabotaged by such things.

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* Shri Chandra Shekhar wanted an assurance from the Prime Minister that the Finance Ministry and financial institutions would be manned by the people having a forward looking view of the society.

** Shri Niren Ghosh opined that the Prime Minister should give some direction that the credit resources of the banks should not go to feed the big business. He also expressed his worry about the bureaucratic management of these banks.

*** Shri A.D. Mani sought an assurance from the Prime Minister that the secrecy of bank operations would be maintained particularly in respect of overdrafts. Secondly, he wanted to know whether the Government would prevent diversion of deposits to non-scheduled Indian banks which had not been affected by the Ordinance and which were receiving deposits from depositors and which were not being nationalised.

I do not think there is any danger for the capital to flow from these nationalised banks to the foreign banks, but if there is any such danger, suitable measures will be taken.*

With regard to the public sector enterprises, there are some public sector enterprises which are not doing well, some are doing well. We have undertaken this exercise to see how to improve those that are not doing well. But I do not think this nationalisation of banks can be on the same lines, because it is entirely a different type of measure. There it is a question of taking up very large projects which may not possibly give quick profits or quick returns. This is quite a different thing. Naturally there are many dangers. If it is not properly dealt with, not properly staffed and if the right policies are not properly outlined, there is the danger that it may not yield the results that we desire. So we are trying to take every step so that it yields the fruitful results that we have in mind, and also it serves the interests of the weaker sections of our society and helps us to eradicate or to lessen regional disparities.

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It is most unfortunate that people try to make political propaganda on each and every occasion, whether it is an important subject or not an important subject. But we are fully capable of settling our problems within ourselves without any interference from hon. Members opposite.

The Members have all given important and good suggestions, and many of the questions have been repeated to which I have already given the answers. There is no doubt that utmost and constant vigilance is necessary for all such measures and that we ourselves are fully conscious of the need that all those who are concerned with the running of these nationalised banks or other public sector enterprises, that one of the essential attributes of such people should be the correct social and economic attitude, and it goes without saying that detailed steps must be devised and urgently implemented if this measure is to be a success, and naturally everybody would like to have a better atmosphere, and I sincerely hope that in creating this better atmosphere we will have the full co-operation of the staff and employees of the banks also.

* Shri Dwijendralal Sen Gupta *inter alia* wanted to know about the steps contemplated to prevent the diversion of deposits from the Nationalised banks to foreign banks and medium banks.

Supreme Court's Order on the Nationalisation of Banks*

In response to some writ petitions the Supreme Court has today passed an Order in regard to the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Ordinance, 1969. The operative part of the order is as follows :

> "Interim stay in respect of three matters, namely, (1) that the Union of India will not appoint pending the hearing and disposal of these petitions any boards of advisors; (2) that the Union of India will not remove the chairman of the various banks; and (3) that the Union of India will not give any directions contrary to the provisions of the Banking Laws Act."

Government are advised that the essential provisions of the Ordinance nationalising the banks are not affected by this order. Thus, the Order does not affect the vesting and the transfer of the undertakings in the corresponding new banks and the allotment of the capital of each bank to the Central Government. The ownership of the banks continues to vest in the Central Government. The former Boards of Directors also stand dissolved.

The Order will also not affect the normal functioning of the banks. The first direction of the court relates to the appointment of Advisory Boards. In view of this, during the interim period, the Reserve Bank would advise the banks as may be appropriate in exercise of the power available under the Banking Regulation Act.

As regards the second direction of the court, there is no reason why the Order should affect the willingness or ability of the Chairman/Custodians to perform their duties properly.

Under the third direction of the court, the Union Government are required to refrain from issuing any direction contrary to the provisions of "Banking Laws Act" which presumably, is a reference to the Banking Regulation Act, as amended from time to time. The Reserve Bank will take special care to assure that nothing is done which is contrary to the public interest or to the interests of the depositors.

The House will appreciate that in an important matter like this, it would not be appropriate for me, at this stage, to say anything more except to assure the House that Government will keep the situation under close watch and take whatever steps may be considered necessary.

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* **Making a Statement regarding the Supreme Court's Order on the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings)** Ordinance, 1969, *L.S. Deb.*, 22 July, 1969, cc. 362–64.

Growth with Stability*

Sir, I rise to present the Budget for the year 1970-71. The annual Budget is the most important instrument through which we implement our successive Plans for development.

Before I proceed to delineate the broad features of our present economic situation and of the Budget, I should like to spell out briefly the main ingredients of Government's approach.

It is generally accepted that social, economic and political stability is not possible without the growth of productive forces and the augmentation of national wealth. Also, that such growth and increase in wealth cannot be sustained without due regard to the welfare of the weaker sections of the community.

Therefore, it is necessary to devise policies which reconcile the imperatives of growth with concern for the well-being of the needy and the poor. Measures have to be devised which, while providing welfare, also add momentum to productive forces. Any severance of the vital link between the needs of growth and of distributive justice will produce stagnation or instability. Both must be avoided.

The provision of adequate employment opportunities is not just a welfare measure. It is a necessary part of the strategy of development in a poor country which can ill-afford to keep any resources unutilised or under-utilised. Greater attention to dry farming areas is not merely to avoid inequalities in the rural areas. It is also an essential part of any programme to achieve sustained increases in agricultural production. Encouragement to small enterprises and to new entrepreneurs is vital to build up managerial and entrepreneurial talent which is all too scarce today. Without some restraint on urban land values and individual ownership of urban property we cannot adequately develop housing and other amenities necessary to wrest the maximum benefit from the vast productive investments already made in our overcrowded towns and cities. The weaker sections of the society are also the greatest source of potential strength. We cannot provide for all the urgent needs of society with our limited resources. But a balance has to be struck between outlays which may be immediately productive and those which are essential to create and sustain a social and political framework which is conducive to growth in the long run.

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* While presenting the General Budget, 1970-71, *L.S. Deb.*, 28 February, 1970, cc. 8-30.

Economic conditions in the country at present permit and indeed require a more vigorous effort to stimulate growth. During 1969-70, the first year of the Fourth Plan, there is every likelihood of achieving an over-all rate of growth of 5 to 5.5 per cent. The modernisation of Indian agriculture is well on its way; and it has led to a substantial recovery in industrial production. There has been a welcome increase in foreign exchange reserves; and the general level of prices over the past two years has been relatively stable. At the same time, it is necessary to set up new capacity in a number of fields in order to sustain growing levels of consumption, exports and employment.

If the opportunities for growth, which are now available, are to be seized fully, the Central and State Governments must make adequate provision for developmental outlays in the coming year. Private investment in agriculture, small industry and construction has been buoyant for some time now ; and there is a revival of interest in investment in organised industry. A decisive increase in Plan outlay in the public sector will also stimulate productive investment in the private sector.

Apart from providing for a significantly higher Plan outlay, the Budget for 1970-71 makes special provision for a number of schemes which combine an element of social welfare with future growth potential.

It is with this positive approach to the problems of growth with stability and social justice, that we have sought to give new emphasis and a new sense of urgency to economic policy in recent months. The nationalisation of banks, for which there is overwhelming support in this Honourable House and the country at large will, I am sure, be soon put on a stable footing. The Monopolies Act and the decisions that the Government have already taken in the light of the recommendations of the Industrial Licensing Policy Inquiry Committee should help to avoid the concentration of economic power and provide encouragement to small and new entrepreneurs. At the same time, well established industrial companies will be able to participate in the core sector and in industries with export orientation. It has also been decided that Government as well as financial institutions should assume special responsibility to promote industrial development in selected backward areas. The Fourth Plan, as it is now being revised, will take particular care to look after some of the urgent socio-economic requirements, such as the development of suitable techniques for dry farming areas, greater employment opportunities for landless labour, the adequate supply of drinking water and the improvement of urban environment in many of our congested metropolitan areas.

According to Revised Estimates, the deficit at the Centre for 1969-70 is now estimated to be Rs. 290 crore as against the Budget Estimate of Rs. 254 crore. The transfer to State Governments, on account of their share in Central taxes and duties, has increased by Rs. 104 crore over the Budget Estimates, largely as a result of the Finance Commission's award. A substantial provision of Rs. 275 crore by way of non-Plan assistance to the States had also to be made so as to enable them to carry out their Plan programmes. As a result of continued decline in imports, the collection under import duties and disbursements under external aid are not likely to come up to Budget Estimates. On the other hand, collections under income-tax and non-tax revenues and receipts from market loans will be larger.

Since several States continue to have gaps in resources, it would be prudent to provide in advance for special assistance to them. Accordingly, it is proposed to provide Rs. 175 crore in the Budget next year to cover the gaps in the resources of certain States since otherwise it would be difficult for them to undertake worthwhile Plan programmes. Provision for Plan assistance to the States is also being increased from Rs. 615 crore this year to Rs. 635 crore next year. If State Governments are able to raise additional resources and keep a careful watch on non-Plan expenditure, it should be possible for them to increase their Plan outlay from roughly Rs. 950 crore this year to about Rs. 1150 crore next year, *i.e.* an increase of the order of 20 per cent.

It is proposed to raise Central Plan outlays, including those on Centrally sponsored schemes, from Rs. 1223 crore this year to Rs. 1141 crore next year, *i.e.*, by roughly 15 per cent. The Centre's Plan next year provides Rs. 39 crore more for agriculture and allied programmes, Rs. 84 crore more for transport and communications, Rs. 31 crore more for power and Rs. 28 crore more for social services, including family planning. The Plan outlay of the Union Territories is also being augmented from Rs. 66 crore to Rs. 76 crore.

Taking the Centre, States and the Union Territories together, the Plan outlay will increase from Rs. 2239 crore in 1969-70 to Rs. 2637 crore in 1970-71, *i.e.*, by about Rs. 400 crore. At this stage, this represents a substantial effort to accelerate the pace of development. In addition to the Plan provisions made in the Budget, institutional finance to assist industry and agriculture will also be mobilised on a larger scale next year. With the considerable step up in Plan outlay and the increased provision of institutional finance, there should be significant increase in employment opportunities in the coming year.

Programmes of rural development which will be given special emphasis, with the help of Plan provisions and institutional finance, are summarised in a memorandum which is being separately circulated to honourable Members. This memorandum also outlines some of the new initiatives which we propose to take in order to combine growth with a greater regard for the welfare of the most needy sections of society. I shall, therefore, refer to them only briefly here :

(a) Special schemes for small farmers are being taken up in 45 districts and research on dry farming techniques is being accelerated.

(b) It is proposed to provide next year a sum of Rs. 25 crore for selected rural works programmes particularly in areas which are prone to famine. This provision will be outside the Plan and will form part of the amount set aside for drought relief during the year.

(c) An Urban Development Corporation with an authorised share capital of Rs. 10 crore is being set up. The Corporation will borrow in the market to supplement its share capital and to set up a revolving fund for financing activities, such as slum clearance, housing and urban land development.

(d) A substantial provision has been made in the Fourth Plan for the supply of drinking water. I have written to the Chief Ministers that the bulk of this provision should

be used to provide drinking water to those areas which have no easy access to this basic requirement rather than to improve existing facilities in bigger towns.

(e) To provide more comprehensive benefits to industrial workers, who are liable to pay contribution to the Employees Provident Fund at the rate of 8 percent of their pay, it is proposed that a part of the contribution of employers and employees should be supplemented by a contribution from the Government to make up a separate fund from which family persons as well as a lump sum payment in the event of death will be provided.

(f) The minimum pension as also family pension for Central Government employees is proposed to be increased to Rs. 40 per month. This decision will apply to those receiving pension at present as well as to those entitled to pensions in future. For industrial employees also, the scheme, to which I referred earlier, provides for a minimum family pension of Rs. 40 per month.

(g) To supplement existing schemes for school feeding and the like, a beginning is being made with a programme to meet the nutritional requirements of the age group 0-3. A provision of Rs. 4 crore is being made in the Budget for children in tribal development blocks and in city slums. From time to time, the programme will be extended with the help of specially designed schemes to raise additional resources.

At the existing rates of taxation revenue receipts are likely to increase from Rs. 3587 crore this year to Rs. 3867 crore next year. After allowing for statutory transfer to the States, the revenue receipts available to the Centre will increase from Rs. 2965 crore to Rs. 3167 crore. Revenue expenditure next year is expected to increase by Rs. 176 crore of which Rs. 68 crore is on Plan schemes and Rs. 103 crore on non-Plan items. Total non-Plan expenditure has been restricted to the minimum and will increase by about 4 per cent.

Hon. Members will also be glad to note that the internal resources of public sector enterprises, which are available for their expansion, will increase from Rs. 162 crore this year to Rs. 202 crore next year. Market loans are estimated at Rs. 162 crore next year as against Rs. 141 crore in the current year. Receipts under PL 480 and other food aid, including some on revenue account, are expected to decline from Rs. 239 crore this year to Rs. 161 crore in 1970-71. Receipts under other aid should be more or less of the some order as this year. Taking account of all other items, including the provision for the Plan and for special assistance to the States outside the Plan, the capital account will show a deficit of Rs. 365 crore. The revenue account is expected to show a marginal surplus of Rs. 15 crore.

With growing prosperity in rural areas, it has become all the more important to tap rural savings for further development. Schemes to mobilise savings for a specific purpose are likely to have greater appeal. A model scheme of debentures to be issued by State sponsored institutions has, therefore, been prepared and it is hoped that rural debentures, floated in accordance with the scheme, will be an additional instrument for the orderly mobilisation of rural savings. The extension of banking to rural areas will serve the same purpose. Even today, our postal system extends to many areas which cannot be covered

by banks in the near future. The postal system, therefore, also needs to be harnessed for greater mobilisation of savings. At present our small savings schemes, including Post Office Savings, Bank accounts, offer facilities for savings with a number of tax concessions. These tax concessions, however, are not of much interest to the rural population or to low income groups, which by and large are not subject to taxation of income. To these groups, a higher rate of interest would be more attractive than a lower rate with corresponding tax concessions. Accordingly, it is proposed to introduce a new series of time deposits, recurring deposits and saving certificates, which will carry higher rates of interest without any special tax concessions. The present tax free facilities will also be continued with slightly higher rates of interest. The rates of interest on contributions to the General Provident Fund and the Public Provident Fund are also being enhanced slightly. I shall have occasion later to refer to some changes in our direct tax structure, which are designed to promote higher savings. A memorandum giving the full details of all these changes is being separately circulated.

The expenditure proposals for 1970-71 which I have just presented have been aimed at stimulating growth while providing for some measures of social welfare for the less privileged sections of the community. The same considerations of growth with social justice must govern the manner in which resources are raised to meet the requirements of Government.

In a country like India, where Government assumes the major part of the responsibility for the promotion of capital formation, the Government Budget should yield a substantial revenue surplus to take care of a part of the needs on capital account. This is all the more so at a time when net receipts under foreign aid and concessional imports of foodgrains are declining in keeping with our objective of achieving self-reliance in the shortest possible time. At existing rates of taxation, the revenue account for 1970-71 will yield only a nominal surplus. This ratio of taxation to national income in India is among the lowest in the world and over the recent past it has declined from the level of a little over 14 per cent which was already reached in 1965-66. There is thus need to enlarge the tax base, so as to meet adequately the continuing requirements of growth and social welfare.

In enlarging the tax base, our first concern must be to ensure that the taxes which are already levied are not avoided or evaded by devices which just manage to keep on the right side of the law. Accordingly, I have tried to plug some major loopholes in our tax system and to withdraw some of the concessions which have outlived their utility. Taxation is also a major instrument in all modern societies to achieve greater equality of incomes and wealth. It is, therefore, proposed to make our direct tax system serve this purpose by increasing income taxation at the higher levels as well as by substantially enhancing the present rates of taxation on wealth and gifts. Because of the urgent need to restrain speculative increases in urban land values and individual holdings of urban property, the taxation of urban land and buildings is being substantially increased. At the same time, the concessions available at present to stimulate savings are being rationalised, so as to make them more effective. Some marginal relief in direct taxation is also proposed for low income groups. In keeping with the need to stimulate higher production and investment no significant change in corporate taxation is proposed.

Nearly 75 per cent of Central tax revenues are derived from indirect taxation, *i.e.*, from customs and excise duties. Any attempt to impart greater strength to the fiscal system, therefore, cannot disregard the scope for increase in indirect taxation. The proposals in this field are designed primarily to raise additional resources in a manner which helps our progress towards self-reliance and restrains the consumption of certain commodities. Such restraint is necessary from the economic or the social point of view. By and large, the additional taxation of investment goods or producer goods has been avoided and the bulk of the increase is in respect of final consumer goods. Wherever it has been necessary to touch items of common consumption, an attempt has been made to safeguard the consumption of the poorer sections of the community to the maximum extent possible.

Direct Taxation

The marginal rates of income taxation will be increased progressively on all personal incomes above Rs. 40,000 per year. With the addition of the surcharge at 10 per cent, the maximum rate of 93.5 per cent will now be reached in the slab over Rs. 2 lakh as against 82.5 per cent in the slab over Rs. 2.5 lakh is present.

Simultaneously, the existing rates of ordinary wealth tax are being enhanced. At present, these rates vary from 0.5 per cent to 3 per cent. They will now vary from 1 per cent at lowest slab to 5 per cent at the highest slab. For the individual, who derives his entire income from wealth, the combined effect of income and wealth taxation, as now proposed, will impose an effective ceiling on income after tax, when such income reaches approximately Rs. 25,000 per annum. On the other hand, there will be an inbuilt incentive in favour of earned incomes. When income is wholly earned, for example, there will be no absolute ceiling, as the highest marginal tax of 93.5 per cent will leave some room for increase in income after tax at all levels.

Hon. Members are aware that we are at present examining practical means of imposing a ceiling on urban property. While the legal and other aspects of the matter are being examined, it is proposed to increase the additional wealth tax on urban lands and buildings, so that the objective of a ceiling on urban property is achieved at least in part, within the framework of the powers already available to the Centre. At present, the additional wealth tax on urban lands and buildings is leviable, in the case of individuals and Hindu undivided families, on the value of lands and buildings situated in cities and towns with a population exceeding one lakh and with an initial exemption ranging from Rs. 4 to Rs. 7 lakh in different categories of cities. The tax is leviable on the balance at rates ranging from 1 per cent to 4 per cent. The maximum rate is reached when the value of urban lands and buildings exceeds Rs. 19 to Rs. 22 lakh. It is now proposed to levy a tax of 5 per cent on the value of urban lands and buildings in excess of Rs. 5 lakh and at the rate of 7 per cent on the value in excess of Rs. 10 lakh. No distinction will be made in regard to the exemption on the basis of the population of the area, in which the properties are situated. The definition of an urban area is also being enlarged to include areas within the limits of any municipality or other similar authority having a population of 10,000 or more, with powers to cover by notification areas upto 8 kilometres outside such limits. Business premises will continue to be excluded from the proposed levy as at present. However, guest houses maintained

by those liable to pay this tax will not be reckoned as business premises. Provisions are also being made to prevent avoidance of the tax by transfer, from individual or joint Hindu family ownership, to ownership by partnership firms associations of persons and closely held companies. Another measure which is intended to serve a similar purpose, provides for the taxation of capital gains arising from the sale or transfer of agricultural land situated within urban areas.

One of the major devices leading to tax evasion and avoidance is the creation of private trusts. At present discretionary trusts are taxed on their income and wealth at the rates applicable to individuals. These lower rates lead to the proliferation of such trusts. It is proposed that in future, discretionary trusts would be taxed at a flat rate of 65 per cent on their incomes and 15 per cent on their wealth or at the rates applicable in the case of individuals, whichever is higher. Provision is, however, being made for exemption from these flat rates for certain categories of existing discretionary trusts.

In the case of charitable and religious trusts, exemption from tax would be allowed only in respect of income actually applied to the purposes of the trust in the same year, or within three months of the close of the year. Further, the exemption will be forfeited altogether if the trust funds constituting its corpus or income, are invested in a concern in which the author or founder of the trust or any of his relatives is substantially interested and the amount of the investment exceeds 5 per cent of the capital of that concern. These provisions will curb the use of the funds of charitable and religious trusts to acquire control over industry and business. Some changes are also being made to prevent indirect benefits being enjoyed by the authors or founders of such trusts. On the other hand the present complete exemption from tax, which applies to Universities and other educational institutions will also be applied in the case of hospitals and other similar institutions.

At present, one residential house is exempted from wealth tax, irrespective of its value, if it is situated in a place with a population not exceeding 10000. For houses situated in larger towns, the monetary limits for exemption is Rs. 1 lakh. The monetary limit of Rs. 1 lakh will now be applied uniformly irrespective of the location of the residential house.

The rates of gift tax are also being revised to bring them more in line with the rates of estate duty and the present exemption limit of Rs. 10,000 in respect of gifts made during a year is being lowered to Rs. 5,000.

Those who are united in Heaven should not be put asunder by a mere tax collector. On this view, the income and wealth of husband, wife and minor children should be aggregated for purposes of income and wealth taxation. But in matters like this, enforced unity sometimes leads to sharper division. It is, therefore, proposed to examine the matter in greater detail and to bring forward the necessary legislation subsequently, giving opportunity for discussion in this House and outside.

At present, income upto Rs. 1,000 from investment in the Unit Trust and upto another Rs. 1,000 of dividends on shares in Indian companies as well as the whole of the interest earned on a number of small savings schemes and Post Office savings accounts is exempt from income tax. There is no reason why a distinction should be made between such

investments and investments in other financial assets, such as securities of the Central or State Governments, approved rural debentures deposits in banking companies, cooperative banks and land mortgage or land development banks and the new small savings scheme and Post Office deposit accounts which are not to enjoy any special tax concessions. It is, therefore, proposed that income upto Rs. 3,000, will be exempt from income tax provided it is derived from investments in Unit Trust or shares in Indian companies or any of the other categories which I have just mentioned. The exemption in respect of small savings schemes and Post Office savings accounts, where special tax concessions are available, will continue to be available additionally.

Similarly, it is proposed that, apart from the present general exemption of Rs. 1 lakh in the case of individuals and Rs. 2 lakh in the case of Hindu undivided families and a residential house upto value of Rs. 1 lakh investments in a wide variety of financial assets upto a total of Rs. 1.5 lakh will be exempt from wealth tax. Even today, investments in specified small saving certificates, Post Office savings accounts and five-year fixed deposits with the Central Government are exempt from wealth tax and any one who takes the maximum advantage of these provisions can claim exemption upto Rs. 12 lakh. The enlarged limit of Rs. 15 lakh will now include investments in the Unit Trust, shares of Indian companies, securities of the Central or State Governments, approved rural debentures, the new small savings schemes and Post Office deposit accounts and deposits in banking companies, cooperative banks and land mortgage or development banks.

On the other hand, in view of these generalised provisions to encourage savings, there is no reason to continue the scheme of tax credit certificates in respect of investments in new equity issues. These will accordingly be discontinued in relation to new equity issues after 31st March, 1970. Existing concessions regarding contributions to life insurance, provident funds, etc., will continue.

Suggestions have been made, from time to time, that the exemption limit for income tax should be raised as a measure of relief to lower income groups and in the interest of better tax administration. It has been urged that by removing a large number of small assessees from the scope of income taxation, Income-tax Officers will have more time to devote to larger cases where the gain to revenue would be correspondingly greater, in a poor country like ours, the present exemption limit which varies from Rs. 4,000 to Rs. 4,800 in accordance with the number of dependents, cannot be considered unreasonably low in relation to the average level of income in the country. At the same time, there is considerable force in the argument that tax administration would improve if income tax authorities did not have to devote so much time to smaller cases. Faced with this dilemma, I have decided to appeal to the higher court of family planning, and I propose to do away with the present system where exemption is related to the number of dependents. In future, a uniform exemption limit of Rs. 5,000 will apply in the case of all non-corporate assessees irrespective of whether they are married or have any children. This will make for greater administrative simplicity and give a small benefit to all income tax payers. The relief will be naturally greater for those who continue to seek relief from matrimony or parenthood as well. The change in respect of the exemption limit would involve some loss of revenue.

But I have taken no debit for it as it should be more than offset by the improvement in tax administration resulting from greater concentration on cases involving the bigger assessees.

It is also proposed to provide a minimum deduction of Rs. 20 per month in lieu of the cost of travel to work to all salaried assessees. At present, deductions ranging from Rs. 5 per month to Rs. 250 per month are permissible for people who travel to work on a bicycle, motor-cycle, scooter, moped or a motor car. The deduction of Rs. 20 per month would be available to those who travel to work on a bicycle or by public conveyance or by any other mode.

At the same time, the higher deduction of Rs. 250 per month for a motor car which is applicable to higher income groups is being reduced to Rs. 200 per month, as there is no reason why those who presumably own a more expensive car should be given a larger deduction. On balance, the revenue loss from travel concession to the lower income groups would be met by the corresponding gain from the reduction in the concession to the higher income group.

It has been decided to leave the present structure of corporate taxation more or less alone in the interest of maintaining a stable climate for investment decisions. The only significant change is that all entertainment expenditure incurred in India in business and the professions will now be disallowed in computing profits. Similarly, expenditure on guest houses, other than holiday homes for the benefit of employees on leave, will be disallowed. Those who enjoy the hospitality of their business friends should now no longer find their sense of gratitude diminished by the thought that a part of the hospitality is really paid for by the Exchequer.

The combined effect of the increases in direct taxation in a full year would be a gain to revenue of Rs. 36 crore. In fact when the measures to plug loopholes such as the revised procedure for the taxation of trusts become fully effective, the revenue gain will be substantially larger. The additional revenue from wealth tax will become available only in 1971-72. The additional revenue from income tax also will be available only in the part during 1970-71 by way of advance tax and deductions at source. Thus, despite the substantial measures of additional direct taxation the net addition to the Centre's resources from these changes in 1970-71 would be Rs. 5 crore only. But it will rise to Rs. 23 crore in 1971-72. The States will gain to the extent of Rs. 10 crore in 1970-71 and Rs. 13 crore in 1971-72.

Indirect Taxation

Turning now to indirect taxation, it is proposed to abolish or reduce export duties on a number of items so as to maintain their competitive position in world markets. The duty on jute canvas, jute webbings, jute tarpaulin cloth and manufactures thereof is being reduced from Rs. 500 to Rs. 200 per metric tonne. The most important chance relates to tea, where the export duty is being abolished altogether. At the same time the excise duty on loose as well as package teas is being raised with the provision for *ad hoc* rebate on exports at rates varying with the price of exported tea. On balance, the duty burden on the export of all teas will be reduced with a margin in favour of teas fetching a higher value so as to

encourage the export of quality teas. The export duty reductions will mean a loss in revenue of Rs. 9.75 crore.

In order to give impetus to import substitution, the import duty on machinery is being raised from 27.5 per cent to 35 per cent *ad valorem*. The increase, however, will not apply to the machinery which is required for the initial setting up of projects, or for substantial expansion of existing-projects, whether in the public or the private sector. The import duty on motor vehicle parts, pharmaceutical chemicals and non electrical instruments, apparatus and appliances will be increased by 10 per cent *ad valorem*. The duty on certain plastic material and michrome and other electrical resistance wires will be raised from 60 per cent to 100 per cent *ad valorem*.

There is a proposal regarding customs duties which is intended neither to replace imports by domestic production nor to produce revenue. In order to curb conspicuous consumption and as a modest gesture of personal, if not political, reconciliation. I propose to increase the duty on whisky, brandy, gin and wines.

Inclusive of additional duties corresponding to the changes in excise duties to which I will soon turn, the additional revenue from import duties will amount to Rs. 29.75 crore. Thus the net gain in customs revenue after adjusting the export duty loss will be Rs. 20.00 crore.

It has often been suggested that the scope for excise taxation should be widened to include taxation at a low rate of about 10 per cent on practically the whole range of manufactured products. Without going that far, it is proposed to levy a 10 per cent *ad valorem* excise duty on a number of new items including office machines, metal containers, sparking plugs, stainless steel blades, slotted angles, iron safes and safe deposit vaults. The levy on office machines, will cover items like typewriters, calculating machines, cash registers, cheque-writing machines, computers and intercom devices. The duty on metal containers will be confined to those intended for the packaging of goods for sale, including casks, drums, cans, gas cylinders and rigid containers. The additional revenue from these new duties will amount to Rs. 10.40 crore.

Similarly, among chemical products, duty at the rate of 10 per cent *ad valorem* will now be levied on calcium carbide, bleaching powder and sodium hydrosulphite and the present duty of 5 per cent on soda ash and caustic soda will be raised to 10 per cent. An excise duty of Rs. 300 per metric tonne is also being levied on synthetic rubber. These changes will bring in an additional revenue of Rs. 5.30 crore.

A 10 per cent *ad valorem* duty was levied last year on prepared and preserved food. The scope of the duty was, however limited by notification to preserved and canned fruits, jams, jellies, fruit juices–squashes and certain meat products. I propose now to remove the bias against, fruits and meat by extending the scope of the levy to include products such as vegetable juices, synthetic syrups and *sherbets*, de-hydrated peas, malted foods, instant coffee, instant tea, jelly crystals, custard and ice-cream powders, biscuits, coca powder, drinking chocolate pasteurised butter, processed cheese, branded aerated waters, glucose and dextrose. I hope, hon. Members will not accuse me of having preferences of

my own as, even under my proposals, aerated waters, biscuits, butter and cheese will be taxed only when manufactured with the aid of powder and there will be total exemption from tax for baby foods and branded 'deshi' ghee. These proposals will yield an additional revenue of Rs. 8.86 crore.

The duty on sanitary-ware and glazed tiles of porcelain will be raised from 15 per cent and 10 per cent respectively to 25 per cent. The duty on room air-conditioners will be raised from 40 per cent to $53\frac{1}{3}$ per cent and similar increase is also being made in respect of larger refrigerators with a capacity exceeding 165 litres. The duty on parts of refrigerators, air-conditioning plants and machinery is also being raised from $53\frac{1}{3}$ per cent, to $66\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. Components and machinery required for cold storage plants, airconditioning of hospitals run by Government, local bodies and public trusts, as well as factory establishments will, however, be exempted from the scope of the increase. It will be seen that small size refrigerators will not be affected. I propose, very reluctantly, to withdraw the exemption in favour of television sets and impose a duty of 20 per cent *ad valorem*. The gain to revenue from these measures will be Rs. 2.24 crore.

In the case of aluminium, the existing specific duties are being replaced by *ad valorem* duties. With a certain degree of rationalisation, this will produce an additional revenue of Rs. 470 crore. The duty of rigid plastic boards and unsupported P.V.C. sheets is also being rationalised by transferring the incidence to the end product and this will yield an additional revenue of Rs. 96 lakhs.

It is proposed to increase the basic excise duty on polyester fibre of 2 deniers or less from Rs. 21 to Rs. 25 per kilogram with a corresponding increase in special excise duty. The present nominal duty of 7.8 paise per sq. metre on artificial silk fabrics which include rayon, nylon, terylene, terycot and terywool fabrics is being replaced by *ad valorem* duty ranging from 3 per cent to 10 per cent. The duty will vary according to the value of the fabric and in the case of the cheaper varieties, whose wholesale price is less than Rs. 2.50 per sq. metre, there will in fact be some relief as compared to the present position. I propose to make no change in relation to cotton fabrics with the exception of a minor measure of rationalisation, whereby certain fabrics at present taxed at specific rates, will be subjected to *ad valorem* levy. The proposals on synthetic fibre and artificial silk fabrics will yield an additional revenue of Rs. 13.78 crore.

The demand for petroleum produce has been increasing very rapidly and it is necessary to exercise some restraint in the interest of saving valuable foreign exchange. It is also necessary to curtail the adulteration of diesel oil by kerosene, which has assumed substantial proportions, and to discourage the use of furnace oil as a substitute for other fuels such as coal. Accordingly, the duty on motor spirit is proposed to be increased by 10 paise litre, on superior kerosene by 2 paise per litre and on furnace oil by 2 paise per litre. The additional excise duty on three items will yield a revenue of Rs. 39.56 crore of which

Rs. 21.36 crore will be in respect of motor spirit and Rs. 9.2 crore is respect of kerosene. The increase in the duty on furnace oil will not apply to such oil used in coastal shipping and for electricity generation and there will be no change in the duty on inferior kerosene. Hon. Members will also note that the increase in the price of superior kerosene will be only modest, *i.e.*, 3.5 per cent.

I am sorry that the smoker's pocket has to be touched once again. The duty on cigarettes is being enhanced with the increase ranging from 3 per cent to 22 per cent *ad valorem* depending on the value slabs. The cheaper varieties of cigarettes will go up by only one or two paise per packet of 10 cigarettes. Assuming that the smoking community remains steadfast in its devotion, the additional revenue from this measure will be Rs. 13.50 crore.

As already mentioned, the excise duty on tea is being raised in order to release larger quantities for export particularly of quality teas. There will be no increase in the duty on loose tea produced in zone one and only a marginal increase of 10 paise per kilo on teas produced in zone two. For other zones, the increase varies from 45 paise to one rupee per kilo. After allowing for the rebate on export, there will be an additional revenue of Rs. 7.87 crore which will be more than offset by the loss in revenue from the abolition of the export duty on Tea.

A uniform of 23 per cent *ad valorem* was levied last year on both levy sugar and free market sugar. Prices of sugar in the free market have declined substantially since then. Accordingly, it is proposed to increase the duty on free market sugar from the present level of 23 per cent to 37.5 per cent *ad valorem*. In the case of levy sugar, which account for 70 per cent of the total, there would only be a marginal rounding off of the present rate from 23 per cent to 25 per cent. In line with the step up on free sugar, though not to the same extent, the tarrif rate of duty on khandsari sugar is being increased from 2.5 per cent to 17.5 per cent. But as far as the rates under the compounded levy system are concerned, which most of the producers elect to adopt, there will be a reduction on the present rates which are being revised keeping in view the fall in prices. The net additional revenue from sugar is estimated at about Rs. 28.50 crore.

There are also a number of changes proposed in the excise duty structure by way of rationalisation, simplification or clarification of the present position. The statutory rate of duty on tin plates, for example, is being raised from Rs. 375 to Rs. 400 per metric tonne, in order to remove the present anomaly of the indigenous tin plates paying a higher cumulative duty than the additional duty borne by imported tin plates. The excice duty on paints and varnishes manufactured by units not employing power will be wholly exempted as also the duty on fertilizer mixtures made out of fertilizers which have a ready paid duty irrespective of whether such mixture are produced by power or not. Some relief is also being accorded in the case of strawboards and millboards by revising the excise duty exemption at certain levels of production. These measures of relief in excise duties will involve a loss in revenue of Rs. 43 lakh. Certain enabling provisions of the Finance Act 1969 are also being continued.

The total effect of all these proposals relating to excise duties will be an additional revenue gain of about Rs. 135 crore, of which Rs. 100 crore will accrue to the Centre and Rs. 35 crore will be the share of the States and Union Territories.

Posts and Telegraphs

The Posts and Telegraphs Department is likely to be in deficit next year also. Accordingly, postal, telegraph and telephone tariffs will be revised to some extent from dates to be notified. These revisions are outlined in a memorandum being circulated with the Budget papers. Briefly, there will be some increase in postal tariffs in respect of parcels, registration fee, despatch of value payable articles, money order commission, supplementary fee for telegraphic money orders and book, pattern and sample packets. Phonograms and greeting telegrams will cost a little more. Charges for telephone calls beyond the first 750 calls in a quarter will increase from 15 paise to 20 paise per call. Hon. Members will note that services such as post cards and inland letter cards, which are generally used by common people, are not being touched; in the case of money orders also no increase is being made upto Rs. 100. The proposed changes will yield Rs. 8.22 crore in a full year and would leave for next year a surplus of Rs. 1 crore after meeting the anticipated revenue deficit. The effect of these changs has been accounted for in reckoning the total internal resources of public undertakings.

Summing up

To sum up, the measures for the additional taxation proposed will yield a total revenue of about Rs. 170 crore in 1970-71 of which Rs. 125 crore will accrue to the Centre and Rs. 45 crore to the States. In subsequent years, when the full effects of the changes in direct taxation will be felt, the gain to Central and States revenues would be larger even without allowing for the normal growth factor. As a result the budgetary gap at the Centre next year will be of the order of Rs. 225 crore as against the Revised Estimate of Rs. 290 crore for current year. In view of the recent upward pressure on prices and the substantial increase in money supply over the past year, some reduction in deficit financing is clearly desirable. At the same time, a deficit of the order of Rs. 225 crore should not cause concern in view of the present favourable supply conditions in regard to foodgrains. The Reserve Bank has already taken a number of steps recently to control credit; and with continued vigilance in this regard, the deficit in the Government Budget now proposed should pose no threat to the general stability of prices. The Central Budget has provided adequately for the plans of the States not only by increasing Plan assistance and by providing for substantial non Plan assistance but also by raising additional resources in a manner which would bring considerable gains to the revenues of State Governments. I hope that against this background, the States will be able to look after their Plan and non-Plan needs without recourse to unauthorised overdrafts from the Reserve Bank.

Sir, before I conclude, I should like to say that in presenting my first Budget to this Hon. House, I have become acutely aware of the challenges as well as the constraints of the contemporary epoch of development of our national economy. At the very beginning of my speech, I endeavoured to set out the broad framework within which this Budget is

cast. That framework, I believe, is consistent with the political, economic and social realities of our country. Convinced as I am of its essential soundness, there is no alternative but to tread a difficult but determined course. If the opportunities for growth which are so much in evidence are to be seized fully, no effort must be spared in raising resources for the purpose. To flinch from this effort at this stage would be to impose even heavier burdens in the years to come. If we allow the present momentum of growth to wane for the sake of some purely temporary advantage we will deny ourselves the cumulative benefits of a higher rate of growth for all time to come. If the requirements of growth are urgent, so is the need for some selective measures of social welfare. The fiscal system has also to serve the ends of greater equality of incomes, consumption and wealth, irrespective of any immediate need for resources. At the same time, the needs of those sectors of our economy which require private initiative and investment must also be kept in mind in the interest of the growth of the economy as a whole. I can only hope that the proposals I have just presented steer clear of the opposite dangers of venturing too little or attempting too much. Thank you.

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*Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I start off by saying that it will always be my endeavour to give justice to all.

I rise with rather mixed feelings. A Finance Minister gets mostly brickbats and I had braced myself for this. But the Budget has been acclaimed by many here in the House and outside and it has been recognised as marking a point of departure, seeking growth with social justice. I myself do not claim much for the Budget.

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Many hon. Members have spoken of the meagreness of the amounts for social welfare schemes. I share their concern but so large is the problem and so vast the numbers involved, that even a hundred times more would hardly be adequate for what is to be done. But we have in all sincerity and earnestness made a small beginning.

The most eloquent tribute to the Budget was paid unwittingly by Professor Madhok when he called it a political Budget. I believe that the Budget should not degenerate into a mere statement of receipts and expenditure; it should set out the direction in which Government wants to lead the country, and seek to mobilise the support of the people for its policies and programmes, by responding in some measure to their urges and aspirations.

In this sense this Budget, like any other sound budget, is a political document. It reflects the political philosophy of the present Government. Through this Budget we seek to move forward towards greater equality of incomes and wealth and to create more opportunities for gainful employment through larger outlay in the public sector and through greater opportunity for small entrepreneurs and small savers.

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* While replying to the General Discussion on the General Budget, 1970-71, *L.S. Deb.*, 17 March, 1970, cc. 314-28.

It is our firm belief that social justice is not only compatible with economic growth but is an essential condition for sustained and orderly growth. Professor Professor Madhok, who is the philosopher of the Jana Sangh, thought that there was too much politics in the Budget, but his counterpart in the Cong. (O), Shri Asoka Mehta, seemed to deplore that there was too little of the new politics.

I am told that one of Shri Mehta's favourite authors was Mr. Erle Stanley Gardner. Many of us here regret his death. As Gardner would have put it, Shri Mehta's is "The Case of the Rueful Radical". Shri Mehta is an adept at polemics of sorts. He talked of embroidery, window dressing and so on. Unfortunately, I am not good at these crafts. But we have all marvelled at Shri Mehta's own skill in embroidering words, not only for himself but for others....

He called me the author of destabilisation. I shall not comment on this. The hon. Member, Dr. Maitreyee Bose has dealt very effectively on this point. She said that it was Shri Mehta who first split the Congress Party, joined the P.S.P., and the split it and finally, re-joined the Congress and again split it. She called him a master splitter. It is well-known that it was not I who was the author of the letters of expulsion and ex-communication which split our party.

Then, Shri Mehta says that between 1962 and 1967 some 32 lakh jobs were created while in four years under my stewardship only 4 lakh jobs were created. But not a word about drought and recession of the recent years and there is no mention of increased defence and development effort which we put in between 1963 and 1965. This selective use of history is not worthy of one who prizes intellectual and cultural freedom.

Shri Mehta wanted a better Budget. Though I listened very carefully to his speech, I could not find any concrete idea of how to make the Budget better. He advocated much larger sums for rural areas, rural works, not just Rs. 25 crore but Rs. 200 crore or even Rs. 300 crore for rural works and other social welfare measures. But he did not say how these additional outlays should be financed. He seemed somewhat unhappy at not being able to make any real criticism. Perhaps what he really meant was that I should have come forward with a Budget which would have provided a better target for attack. At the same time, he did concede that, perhaps, I had accelerated the trend by a year or so. I think, to accelerate the trend of progress by a year or so is no mean achievement, and I take it as a compliment. If I were asked to name the single most important feature of the Budget, I would unhesitatingly say that it is an attempt to break the spell of fiscal stagnation. The new Budget restores to the public sector, the original role envisaged for it as the pace-setter for the economy.

Since 1964-65, we have had to severely prune the development programmes of the public sector. We should perhaps have taken advantage of the comparatively good harvest of 1967-68 and 1968-69 to step up the rate of investment in the economy. But we had over-reacted to the phenomenon of rising prices during the closing stage of the Third Plan and had cut back sharply on investment. This significant drop in public investment was one of the reasons for accentuating unemployment. The cut in the investment in Public

Sector had induced a set-back in the tempo of investment in the private sector also. Hon. Member, Shri Masani, may not agree, but some of his business colleagues will tell him that in the conditions prevailing in our country, a significant reduction in public sector investment results also in recession in the private sector. This is turn leads to sluggishness in the growth of the revenues of the Central and State Governments, necessitating further caution in regard to investment programmes in the public sector. This is a vicious circle of slow growth in resources and decline in the rate of investment and it has to be broken at some point. The present Budget does seek to do this. It provides for an increase in the Plan outlay by Rs. 400 crore in the coming year. We believe that this increase along with other fiscal and monetary policies of the Government will stimulate the economy and employment opportunities all round. This will in turn make a favourable impact on public revenues and thus restore a measure of dynamism to our economy.

If the stock exchanges have reacted favourably to the Budget, it is not because a particular item was taxed or another item was not taxed, but because they recognize the simple fact that the budget will boost the economy.

As usual, Shri Masani has attacked our whole economic policy. It is strange that a person who is so articulate should be content to make the same speech every year. (*Interruptions*).

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He* has or his Party has certain formulae. Scrap the Plan, there will be more development; Reduce the tax, there will be more revenue; there will be more income if the Government did not attempt to raise more resources for development, and after 1962, for Defence, I suppose, extending this argument logically both ways, if income tax, excise and customs are all zero, perhaps income would be infinity.

Then, again : If the tax collection machinery improves, there would be no need to increase the rates. I can see the scope of tightening the tax administration. We all know that a great deal has to be done. We are making every effort to do it. Many measures have been taken and I hope we will be able to improve further. But we all know that in every country, not only in India, but even in the more affluent countries like USA, UK and France—just to name a few big tax-payers do try to withhold as much as they can. With the spread of public health measures, affluent countries also have diseases, there are new diseases of affluence and one such disease is the avoidance of tax.

Many Members have expressed their concern over prices. It is most important to protect the incomes, of those who are already in employment, from erosion becasue of rise in prices. But can we overlook the interests of those who are unemployed or under-employed and those who have no income at all ? Their only hope lies in a balanced and judicious acceleration of the pace of investment in the economy.

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* Shri S.K. Tapuriah.

We want growth with stability. Growth may in fact, be a prerequisite for stability if it is interpreted as comprising not merely the stability of prices but also social stability.

Many hon. Members from the Opposition have sought to denigrate the performance of public enterprises. This is not a new experience for us. It takes place during practically every Question Hour. The Swatantra Party would like to confine the State to the maintenance of law and order and certain basic services, leaving the whole field of industry and commerce to the unregulated functioning of the private sector.

The speeches of some hon. Members of the Cong. (O) echoed the speech from the Chair in Faridabad last year. We do want our public enterprises to make profit. We do want them to be efficiently managed. But, let us not forget that the public sector has another important objective–the building up of the infrastructure for the economy as a whole. The metallurgical, heavy engineering and heavy electrical units in the public sector are designed for this purpose. These industries are, by their very nature, capital intensive and have long gestation periods. The critics of the public sector conveniently overlook the difficulties arising from drought and recession which industry in general, both in the public and private sectors, had to face. In the last few years, many engineering units in the private sector have also faced difficulties similar to those of public enterprises, that is, lack of orders, under utilisation of capacity and so on.

Even so, the performance of public enterprises has been improving, and Government have taken a number of steps in the recent past to ensure greater efficiency in their management. During 1968-69, of the 73 running concerns, 42 made a net profit of Rs. 66.23 crore as against Rs. 48.95 crore made by 40 concerns in the previous year. Even after setting off the losses incurred by other units, the performance of public enterprises in 1968-69 registered an improvement over the previous year. The overall net loss of public enterprises was reduced from Rs. 37.89 crore in 1967-68 to Rs. 27.67 crore in 1968-69.

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While evaluating the performance of public enterprises, particularly the bigger units such as Hindustan Steel, we should, in fairness, recognise that similar units in the private sector did not fare better in their initial years. Tata Iron and Steel which was incorporated in 1907 declared its maiden dividends only in 1915-16. Thereafter, it declared dividends only in 1920-21 and in 1935–36. The regular dividend on its ordinary shares was being declared only from 1940-41 onwards.

Now, Sir, balance-sheets are important, but in assessing the role of the public enterprises in our strategy of development, we should look beyond their balance-sheets. We envisage an expanding role for the public sector, because we want it to occupy a key position in our economy.

Only such expansion will lay the foundation for a self-reliant economy and will prevent the concentration of the ownership of the means of production. These enterprises belong to the nation. The very fact that they are publicly-owned ensures that their performance

will be under constant public scrutiny and that there will be constant pressure for their improvement.

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Shri Masani has alleged—I believe the word he used was 'under brutal Soviet pressure'—that an Indian consultancy firm has been pushed out of the job of consultancy in Bokaro, which had been promised to them. He has further alleged that the Central Engineering and Design Branch is 'nothing but a cover and a facade for the Soviet consultancy organisation, Gipromez'.

There is no question whatsoever of our acting under pressure, whether brutal or gentle, from any quarter, whether Soviet or Swatantra.

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During the first stage, that is, upto 1.7 million tonnes, Gipromez was the main consultant while Dastur and Co. were assigned certain specific responsibilities. During the next stage of expansion upto 4 million tonnes, it was felt that since we wanted to develop our own consultancy organisation, there was no longer any need to employ the Soviet organisation as the main consultant. Far from giving Gipromez a larger role in the second stage of Bokaro, we propose to give a larger role to our own consultancy organisation. Presumably the complaint is that in choosing the principal consultants we have chosen our own organisation in the public sector. *viz.*, the Central Engineering and Design Branch of Hindustan Steel rather than Dastur and Co. I do not think I need apologise for choosing a public sector consultancy organisation as our principal consultant. We should like Dastur and Co. also to continue as consultants during the second stage for the same kind of work as was entrusted to them during the first stage.

I would like to say a word about the CEDB of Hindustan Steel. It is not an agent or satellite of any foreign consultancy organisation; but to build up its own potential, it has entered into certain agreements with a number of foreign firms and consultancy organisations including Gipromez of the Soviet Union. They have made similar agreements with United Engineering of the US and Messrs. Otto of West Germany. They are proposing to enter into an agreement with Messrs. VOEST of Austria.

The detailed project report for Bokaro expansion has already been approved by the Government of India. If we decide to strengthen our own consultancy organisation, this does not in any way imply lack of confidence in private consultancy organisations such as Dastur and Co. or others. We are committed to encourage Indian consultancy organisations in every possible way. But hon. Member will agree that any agitational approach to secure particular contracts at the expense of competitors is not likely to promote the interest of developing indigenous consultancy capability. There is enough work in our country for all the organisations that exist in this field.

There was a further allegation that payments to the Soviet consultancy organisation for services rendered were to be made in pounds sterling or the gold content of the rupee.

Here again the hon. Member has been misinformed. All such payments are to be made under the Soviet credit for Foreign Plan projects for which an agreement was signed in December, 1966. All our credit agreements with the Soviet Union provide—and I quote—

> Repayments by way of principal and payment of interest may be used by the Soviet organisations to purchase goods in India in accordance with the Indo-Soviet Trade Agreement in force and/or may be freely converted into pounds sterling.

No repayment has so far been made to the U.S.S.R. in pound sterling, nor has any request been made for such payment in pound sterling. There are standard clauses in all our credit agreements regarding adjustments to be made in case of change in the exchange rate. Here again, the situation is no different from that in respect of credits from Western countries where, since repayments are determined in foreign exchange, the rupee equivalent varies automatically in response to changes in the exchange rate.

Some hon. Members have asserted that revenues have been overestimated to the extent of Rs. 100 to Rs. 150 crore. My colleague, Shri Sethi, has already dealt with this point. Hon. Member opposite, Shri Mehta, spoke of this also, but did not adduce any argument in support of his thesis. He declared he would not go into details, but would be prepared to discussion. We always welcome such discussion and exchange of views, but I would like to assure hon. Members that the revenue estimates for 1970-71 have been worked out most carefully, without any underestimation or overestimation, and they reflect our best judgment as of today. There is every likelihood that with the increase in import licences which has already taken place and the more liberal provision for imports which is proposed, the revenue from import duties will increase as estimated by Rs. 35 crore or so. The estimated increase of ten per cent in Union excise duties is based on the likely increase in consumption and production of excisable items. Even my colleague Shri Salve wondered how excise revenue could increase by ten per cent when industrial production was likely to increase by 7.5 per cent or so. The weightage of commodities in industrial production is not the same as the weightage of commodities that enter into the collection of excise duties. To give only one example, commodities such as petroleum products account for a much larger share of excise revenue than their share in total industrial production. The revenue from direct taxes should exceed the estimates presented in the Budget. As Shri Salve and some other hon. Members have pointed out, at least in one respect, that is the collection under Wealth Tax, we have been careful to assume a slight decline in revenue at existing rates of taxation for the coming year, since collections in the current year represent to some extent an acceleration in the pace of assessment. I do not say that there could be no variations, either up or down, but I must strongly repudiate the suggestion that we have deliberately tried to present a rosier picture of the situation than is warranted by facts as we see them now.

A number of speakers have referred to the provision of special assistance of Rs. 175 crore to the States to enable them to have worthwhile plan programmes. It has been suggested that this provision is not constitutional and that it is intended to be used for political purposes to favour certain States and to punish others. Such an allegation only reflects the mental make-up of those who make it. It probably represents what these

Members would do in like circumstances, but it is not the way in which I function. In every session hon. Members have spoken up for one or other State, which is suffering from chronic financial difficulties because of the burden of accumulated debts and other factors. It has been repeatedly urged that these chronic difficulties of the weaker States should be met by the Centre by debt re-scheduling or by any similar form of special assistance. On more than one occasion, we have assured the House that we would look into this question and do whatever be necessay after we received the recommendations of the Finance Commission.

The Finance Commission examines only the position of revenue account and does not examine the position of different States on capital account. (*Interruptions*.) That is why the recommendations of the Finance Commission cannot solve the problems of the weaker States which might arise from factors like the burden of accumulated debts.

The Planning Commission has been aware for quite some time that many States have non-Plan gaps and that unless these gaps are covered by some form of speical assistance, it would not be possible for them to undertake Plan programmes which the Planning Commission considers worthwhile.

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What is more, as long as there are non-Plan gaps, any additional resources mobilised by these States are going to cover these gaps rather than be available for Plan purposes. The Planning Commission has been urging that in order to provide an incentive for the States to raise resources some special effort should be made to help these States in meeting their non-Plan gaps.

After receiving the recommendations of the Finance Commission, the Planning Commission has had a series of detailed discussions with each State, and as a result of these discussions, it has arrived at certain conclusions about the special assistance that should be given to eight or nine States, in addition to what they would receive as part of Plan assistance or in response to the recommendations of the Finance Commission.

It is in the light of this examination and in response to a specific recommendation of the Planning Commission that it was decided to provide special assistance.

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There is nothing arbitrary about the figure of Rs. 175 crore or about the manner in which this assistance will be given. There is nothing unconstitutional about the provision of such *ad hoc* assistance to the States. Even this year such *ad hoc* assistance to the tune of Rs. 275 crore is likely to be given to the States. All that we have done for the next year is to provide in advance for need which is already felt and for which a great deal of concern has been expressed in this House.

I strongly repudiate the suggestion that there is anything sinister or irregular about the provision. The assistance will be made available on the assessment of the resources position of the States in relation to the approved Plans, and will thus conform to the well

recognisable criteria. The assistance is also not unconditional. It will always be subject to sound fiscal management on the part of the States. We would certainly stipulate that the State do all that they can to mobilise and conserve their resources.

Hon. Members have asked for the names of the States. I would not like to give them just now because the assessment of the resources position of the States is not quite complete. It would not be proper to name them as the Planning Commission would like to obtain a commitment as firm as possible from the States in need of such assistance to raise the maximum possible resources on their own. In the course of the year, the House will certainly have the full details of the assistance provided to the States. Then they would appreciate how objective we have been.

Shri Masani chose even to question the competence of the Union Government to extend assistance to the States. The Government of India have, subject to the authority of Parliament, the right to extend loans and grants to the States under article 282 and 293(2) of the Constitution. Such loans and grants have been given since the commencement of the Constitution and are inescapable in any federal set-up.

Some hon. Members have stated that the welcome increases in direct taxation might led to greater tax evasion and black money thus putting the honest tax payer relatively to a greater disadvantage. We are well aware that greater equality cannot be achieved merely by increasing the rates of taxation.

These have to be followed up by systematic and stringent measures to improve the machinery of tax collection to tool out avoidance and evasion of taxes. As I said earlier, we propose to do all that is possible, energise our tax collection and to deal with tax evasion and avoidance with the utmost severity.

We have taken some measures to plug the loopholes in tax laws such as those in relation to trusts. It has been represented here and outside that the provision now made relating to public charitable trusts, specially in regard to the time given to them to comply with some of these conditions may lead to difficulties in genuine cases. We shall try to remove any genuine difficulties, but no quarter can be given to the tax evader.

I now come to the apprehension that the budget might add to inflantionary pressures. A deficit of Rs. 225 crore next year is not large, if we bear in mind the precipatated increase in production. Before the presentation of the Budget, nearly economic commentators agreed that we could provide for a deficit of something like Rs. 100 crore. Our own assessment was a little more cautious and we decided in labour of a smaller figure. I have already refuted the charge that the deficit would be large becasue of over estimation of revenue.

There is also some misgiving that the deficit might be larger because of the State Governments adding to it. As I said earlier, it was to forestall this situation that next year we have provided an advance for special assistance. The proposed new Central measures of taxation will make as much as Rs. 45 crore extra available to the State Governments. At this stage, it is not possible to have a very clear or comprehensive picture of the position as it emerges from the State budgets, already presented or going to be presented. The

deficits, as published do not take into account the special assistance provided and in some cases the market borrowings.

I am glad that some States have come out with proposals to mobilise additional resources. With all the measures which we have taken to assist the States, they can no longer have any justification to run into unauthorised overdraft from the Reserve Bank. If they fail to play their full part in resource mobilisation, their plan programmes are bound to suffer.

Regarding the criticism that increase in indirect taxation will lead to an increase in prices, care has been taken to limit the new imposts as far as possible to items which are consumed by the upper class. There is hardly any reason why the comparatively better off sections should not pay for things like juices, syrups, custard, icecream, cheese and chocolates (*Interruptions*). The only imposts which might conceivably affect the common people would be the increase in excise duties on sugar, kerosene and tea. But even here a conscious effort has been made to introduce the concept of equitable discrimination as between the different income groups.

As regards tea, there is no proposal to increase the duty on the loose varieties produced in Zone-I and on packed varieties containing 25 gms. or less. Similarly, the proposed increase in the case of Zone-II is only ten paise per kg. Those two Zones account for more than half of the total production and nearly two-thirds of the aggregate domestic consumption of era. The effect of adjustments of excise duty in tea would, therefore, be insignificant, particularly as the poorer sections consume loose tea. The maximum proposed increase is in Zone-III which products quality Darjeeling varieties, the bulk of which is intended for export.

As regards sugar, the central excise duty on levy sugar is to be raised by two per cent, from 23 per cent to 25 per cent *ad valorem*. Half of the proposed additional levy would accrue to the State in lien of a sales tax. The basis of price fixation with respect to the levy on sugar has recently been altered in accordance with the recommendations of the Tariff Commission.

Over large parts of the country, even after the proposed duty, the ex-factory price of levy sugar inclusive of duty, would be lower than the corresponding price obtained before the 20th February of this year.

As regards the effect of the excise duty of free sale sugar, we must remember that the price of free market sugar declined by nearly 50 per cent as compared to the prices obtaining in March 1969, and in view of the sharp increase in the output of sugar in the current year further decline in the price of free market sugar can be expected in the coming months. Even with the proposed increase in excise duty, the chances are that in 1970-71 we would be paying a lower price for free sale sugar than in 1969-70.

As regards kerosene the proposed duty is only two paise per litre. Taking into account the weightage of the index of wholesale prices of the different commodities, on which

taxes are being increased, the increase should not go to more than half per cent even if the entire burden of the additional taxation is passed on to the consumer.

There is no single unchangeable definition of the words 'luxury' and 'necessity'. As incomes go up, sanitaryware or preserved foods may be regarded as necessities. But if resources are to be enlarged, it cannot be argued that commodities like preserved foods or sanitaryware should escape taxation altogether. While considering the incidence of taxation on the lower income groups, we should not ignore the beneficial impact of the welfare schemes proposed, such as family pension, schemes for industrial workers, enhanced minimum pension for Government servants, child welfare programmes etc. As I said earlier, price stability is essential for social justice and rising prices do cause social tension. In assessing the price situation it would be highly misleading if estimates are made on the basis of trends over one or two months. Let us not invoke the horrors of the inevitable failure of the monsoon or some such thing. The average level of wholesale prices between April 1969 and January 1970 was roughly three per cent higher than the average level during the corresponding period of previous year. Between the middle of January and the middle of February this year, the wholesale price index remained stable after rising for about three months. The credit measures taken by the Reserve Bank are beginning to have some effect. One hon. Member was needlessly harsh on the Reserve Bank, particularly on its Governor, who has rendered distinguished service to the country in more than one capacity.

The events of the last few months have brought about much needed discussion and heart-searching in the political forces of the country and there is a movement towards a certain crystalisation, which will help us to pursue more efficiently our positive social and economic objectives. It is not surprising that critics are unable to find anything new in the Budget because they have failed to appreciate one simple fact. If we are to carry forward this great nation to its rightful destiny at a crucial period of history, we have to bring about simultaneous transformation in our social, political and economic life.

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In this, I am aware, we are not advocating anything very new but the Budget does indicate the directions in which we intend to move forward. Shri Chandrajit Yadav has referred to these. I was also glad that a dispassionate observer such as Shri Tenneti Viswanatham has focussed the attention of this House on these initiatives. I am glad also that Shri Dwivedy has recognised the new departures which the Budget makes specially in the direction of social equality.

No one can be more keenly aware of the fact that we have tried to achieve in the Budget only a small but significant beginning. But, as I have said on previous occasions here, the greatest distances can be covered by small steps and this Budget is one such step. I have no doubt that it will lead us to other steps and the country will be able to go ahead with greater dynamism, vigour and speed.

Equality-Based Growth*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the first speaker for the Opposition said that there was nothing new in the Budget, but the young doctor, I think it was from the Jan Sangh, Dr. Bhai Mahavir, was pleased to describe it as the most significant Budget since 1947. I myself do not make any such resounding claim for the Budget and I believe that had circumstances permitted, the Budget could have been better and bolder. Sir, there is not much new. The poverty of the country is not new. Our desire to fight poverty is not new, but in every earnest Budget something dynamic must be done to fight against these old familiar problems. In the last twenty years we have taken up several challenges. Planning itself has been the acceptance of a mighty challenge. As my father once said, the timid of heart would not have built a Bhakra Dam and several steel plants. It is because we accepted the challenge of development and built the infrastructure that we are today at the stage of building the main structure and also addressing ourselves to the reduction of inequalities and disparities.

The hon. Member, Shri Chatterjee, has cast what I would consider a slur on our people and has hurt the country's pride when he asserted that 70 per cent of our outlay came from aid. In fact, he alleged that in the First Plan 81 per cent of all our outlays had come from aid. I am afraid, his figures are totally wrong and misleading, whether they relate to the First Plan or to the later Plans. In fact, the truth is quite otherwise. In the Fourth Plan as now envisaged only about 8 per cent of the total outlay constitutes foreign aid, net of repayment. Even in terms of gross aid, it will constitute 18 per cent. Thus, a significant part of the investment in our economy is financed by the efforts and sacrifices of our own people. Even taking together the entire eighteen years of planned economic development, foreign aid would constitute only 23 per cent of the total outlay. Let us, therefore, not minimise the contribution which our people have made in the building up of our economy. The country's integrity and progress are certainly two great objectives for which our people are willing to shoulder the burden. The poor are also asked to bear a part of the burden in the form of indirect taxes.

If, over the years, there has been an increase in taxation, direct or indirect, it was primarily for development, which is as urgent a problem as any other. In the last few years there has been another unavoidable and urgent problem and that is to increase our defence preparedness.

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* Replying to the General Discussion on the Budget, 1970-71, *R.S. Deb.*, 25 March, 1970, cc. 133-44.

The State Governments, of which Shri Chatterjee's party was a constituent until recently, have also agitated for more development projects. I must say that they did not disown responsibility for resources, the bulk of which they would have to realize through indirect taxes such as the sales tax. Every indirect tax is not inherently iniquitous. Nor can we view the tax structure in isolation. We have to see it in relation to the pattern of public expenditure. If we raise resources to finance development and social welfare programmes, the intention is that, on the whole, the net effect may be to bring about a transfer of income from the comparatively affluent to the poorer sections of the society. So, when Members criticise these specific proposals of taxation, I should like them to bear in mind that the Budget provides also for certain new initiatives in social welfare services. I am aware that these provisions are inadequate, but as we have said in the Budget itself, they mark only a beginning. In framing the tax proposals we have taken care to soften the impact on the lower income groups. The only imposts which could marginally affect the common people are the increases in the excise duties on sugar, kerosene and some varieties of tea. With regard to sugar, the bulk of the poor people have to content themselves with what is supplied to them through fair price shops under the levy scheme. The increase in the excise duty on levy sugar is only two per cent. Even here, as the ex-factory price of sugar in many regions has been reduced in the light of the recommendations of the Tariff Commission, the poor consumers may not, on the whole, be worse off. With regard to tea also we have adopted a selective approach. There is no increase on the loose varieties produced in Zone I and on the packed varieties containing 25 gms or less. The increase indicated in the case of Zone II is only ten paise per kilogram. These two Zones account for about two-thirds of the total consumption within the whole country. The increase in respect of kerosene is 2 paise per litre and has been proposed in order to prevent its misuse in replacing diesel. Incidentally there is some misunderstanding that our excise levies will increase the cost of public transport. There is no basis for this, because we have not taxed diesel. We have taxed petrol and most of the public transport vehicles operate on diesel.

The transference of income from the small group of the rich to the large majority of the poor is certainly one of the main objects of the Budget, but it cannot be the only object. Equal sharing by all of what we now have would still not improve the lot of the poor very much. It would at the most be a psychological satisfaction. Our great task is to raise production to ensure that the size of the national product goes up. So, the Budget cannot be just a sickle. It has also to be a plough.

As the hon. Member, Shri M.N. Kaul, has rightly remarked, the Budget in our country has to create confidence, confidence in the general public that it does more towards welfare and also among the productive elements that it does, in fact, help growth. We can legitimately claim that this Budget does both these things.

Some hon. Members have inquired why we have spared the corporate sector in the present budget. Now, the rates of taxation on the corporate sector are not low, but the existing rates are eroded by a number of rebates, concessions and exemptions which reduce the effective rate of taxation. In the last few years a number of concessions were given to the corporate sector. We have not offered any new concession to this sector. On the contrary, we have reduced some of the existing concessions. The development rebate has been

reduced. The tax credit scheme has been withdrawn and we have now taken decisive action to curb conspicuous consumption in the form of entertainment expenditure and lavishly furnished guest houses. We have also proposed several measures which will check the diversion of resources into unproductive and speculative channels. In fact the very vehemence with which one Member of the Swatantra party, I believe Shri Mehta, has reacted to the proposals dealing with Trusts and urban land should convince us that these changes will bite and thus have the desired effect. Shri Mehta was at least consistent with his and his party's point of view. But what can one say of Dr. Bhai Mahavir, who expressed great sympathy for the poor but shed more tears for the people in the Rs. 2 lakhs to Rs. 5 lakhs income group ? He and his party have perhaps not yet fully adjusted themselves to the new socialism which they are now advocating.

The hon. Member, Shri Gurupadaswamy, who sits opposite, raised the question of the repayment of foreign loans. He dwelt on the evils of aid and maintained that we should have been better off without aid. It would be interesting to know at exactly what point of time his views on foreign aid have changed. He has also criticised the children's programmes implying perhaps that these were not necessary since they are already covered by UNICEF.

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If he has not criticised it, then well and good*. I said myself that we have not been able to allot sufficient funds for this and what we have done is to make a beginning in the right direction.

Some of these programmes have been worked in the country but on a very small scale and in only one or two parts of the country, now we would like them to spread in a more systematic manner.

Shri Gurupadaswamy also said that we have not been able to meet our repayment obligations and have asked foreign Governments to reschedule these payments. I should like to put the question of debt relief in its proper perspective. In the early years when we started taking foreign aid, such aid was generally given on what are known as hard terms. In recent years the international concept of terms of aid has changed and aid is now being made available to developing countries, including our own, on softer terms. We should also remember that while in most cases, foreign aid is tied to purchases within the donor countries, the payment of loans in most cases has to be made in free foreign exchange. The World Bank and other members of the Consortium have recognised that some form of debt relief is necessary in these circumstances. India has had a very clean record of honouring all her obligations, and we shall continue to maintain this record.

We have looked upon debt servicing as the first charge on our export earnings. Debt relief is of the same nature as fresh aid in the form of free foreign exchange which can be

* Responding to Shri M.S. Gurupadaswamy's observations : "I did not say that it was not necessary. I only said that it was conceived earlier and has been extended in bits and pieces. I was not against it".

used for any of our various essential needs without being tied to purchases of items available from donor countries only.

In evaluating this Budget the emphasis should be on its main thrust. Certain criteria have been kept in view. We thought that the foremost objective of the Budget should be to guide the nation back to the course of growth from which it had slipped. We were convinced that a new dynamism had to be imparted to the economy and that this could be done only through a purposive increase in the size of the Plan and the developmental outlay in the public sector. Let us recognise frankly that in the last few years public investments have not been on the desired scale, and after the years of drought and recession, the private sector also was not able to rekindle the spark of growth. Public investments were held back because of fiscal difficulties and there was a corresponding set back in private investment, thus proving beyond doubt that in the present climate the private sector cannot survive or prosper unless the public sector grows vigorously. It is the impulse generated by Government expenditure which stimulates private investment. We have taken all this into account and have made a determined bid through this Budget to break away from the stagnation in investment in recent years. In this sense at least we have deviated from what has been called the beaten track.

As hon. Members may have noticed, the outlay on the Plan is being pushed up by Rs. 400 crore, an increase of 18 per cent over the current year. I am sure that this increase will enliven general economic activity and will also stimulate investment in the private sector. There should be no controversy at all over this part of the Budget. Perhaps the only party which could possibly be unhappy is the Swatantra which considers any increase in the public sector to be almost a sin.

Thus, the budget aims at economic growth. But of what good is economic growth if it is accompanied by increased social tensions and if it does not mitigate distributive injustice? The gains from economic growth should be shared by all sections of society. The increase in the Plan outlay, by its own momentum, will bring greater opportunities for gainful employment to the weaker sections of society. But we have also incorporated several programmes which are specially oriented towards employment. Some figures of the magnitude of unemployment have been mentioned. We have touched upon this subject on a previous occasion in this House. I shall not rush in where even economic and statistical experts fear to tread. The House is aware that a Committee of experts under Prof. Dantwala was appointed to study the existing statistics of unemployment and to make suitable recommendations for a proper assessment of the dimensions of this problem. We have received only a provisional report. This provisional report throws doubt on the various attempts made in the past to quantify precisely the extent of unemployment. After carefully looking into the estimates which were used in the Plan documents, the Group formed the "considered view that the data available for the estimates were inadequate, and the conclusions based on them not accurate". The Expert Group's view is that while the lay public desires precise estimates, in our social situation such precision is not possible. There is more seasonal unemployment and under employment than outright unemployment, and the two cannot be aggregated. Household enterprises are so widely prevalent that many

people only technically enter the labour market, but will not seek or accept outside employment.

However, whether it is the unemployment problem or other problems facing the economy, I as conscious as are hon. Members that the financial provisions made this year are not sufficient to tackle all these problems in the short run. At the same time, a beginning has been made in this budget to rediscover and redefine the egalitarian purpose which is an integral part of the process of our economic growth.

In pursuing these objectives, we have not over-looked the need for price stability. Price stability is essential for social justice. I know that when prices rise, it is the poor and the fixed income groups who suffer the most. The impact of the proposed changes in indirect taxes on the price level will be minimal. Government regret that trade tends to increase prices by more than the actual incidence of taxation would warrant. Similarly, with regard to deficit financing, we are confident that this can be absorbed by the system, without disturbing the price level. The measures included in the Budget should induce a rate of growth of economy of 5 to 6 per cent. In the current year our economy has, in fact, registered an increase of 5.5 per cent to 6 per cent. The production of food grains will be of the order of one hundred million tonnes, and we have ample stocks of food grains in the public godowns. The deficit we have left uncovered is therefore unlikely to have adverse effects. However, I should like to assure the hon. Members that we shall continue to be alert in ensuring and enforcing price stability. We shall keep a close watch over public finances and other bank credit to the private sector. It will be our continuous endeavour to apply restraint whenever it is called for. But I am sure the House will agree that we cannot sit back and allow opportunities for economic development to be frittered away for fear of adverse seasonal conditions or even for fear of a rise in the price level.

While attempting to reduce social inequalities and to maintain price stability, we have also taken care that incentives for savings are not impaired. Capital formation backed by our own internal savings has to be the keystone of development. With this in view, we are deliberately trying to augment incentives for savings.

Several hon. Members have referred to the increase in the non-developmental expenditure in recent years. I think that they are labouring under certain misconceptions. Taking capital account first, the rate of increase of developmental expenditure over the last decade has in any case far outstripped that for other items. But even on revenue account, the record is not unsatisfactory. The total expenditure met from revenue was Rs. 953 crore in 1960-61. It is proposed to be Rs. 3152 crore for 1970-71. Of this increase over the decade, a sum of Rs. 543 crore represents the increase in developmental expenditure while the rest is accounted for by other items. For example, Rs. 770 crore are accounted for by defence, Rs. 404 crore by debt services, Rs. 245 crore by grants-in-aid to States and Union territories, and only Rs. 237 crore by other types of expenditure such as administrative services and tax collection charges. This will show that if defence, debt services and grants-in-aid to States are excluded, the rest of the increase in non-developmental expenditure has been quite moderate. As a percentage to the revenue expenditure excluding defence, debt services and grants-in-aid to the States, the Union Governments non-developmental

expenditure has steadily declined over the years. Its was 45 per cent in 1960-61 but 39 per cent in the current year. It is expected to go down further to 36 per cent next year.

A number of hon. Members have expressed misgivings regarding the provision of Rs. 175 crore made in the Budget for special accommodation. My colleague, Shri Khadilkar, touched upon this point yesterday and I also touched upon it during the last question Hour here. We have already made it clear that we are not breaking any new ground in providing such loans. Such special accommodation has been given on an *ad hoc* basis to States in the past and it has often been in the nature of a hurried response to a call for financial help. After examining the impact of the Award of the Fifth Finance Commission, the Planning Commission found that some States had non-Plan deficits and that their additional resource mobilisation was being absorbed almost wholly in meeting their overall non-Plan deficits, taking both capital and revenue accounts in some cases. The Planning Commission therefore asked the Government to make special provision for such States. This accommodation is not unconditional. It is subject to the assurance that the States concerned will contain the gap within the limits agreed upon and mobilise additional resources to the extent expected of them.

Some hon. Members have attempted to impute political motives. They should at least try to take the trouble to verify their facts before making such charges. May I remind those who seek every opportunity to malign us that among the States which have welcomed this provision are Orissa and Mysore? They recognise that this special accommodation will be given according to well-understood criteria. The actual funds to be advanced to the individual States will be discussed with the State Governments and the Planning Commission, and we shall abide by the technical judgment of the Planning Commission in this matter.

What we have tried to do, and that also to a very small extent, is that whereas the States which are relatively better off should make a somewhat larger contribution of their own towards their progress, others should receive a somewhat higher assistance from the Centre. In relation to industrial development also, we expect the more established houses to make a greater contribution from their own resources for their expansion and rely to a lesser extent on public financial institutions. This is the general policy which we advocate internationally also; that is, the richer countries should help the developing ones.

A Member, from Tamil Nadu I think, called the Centre a monarch and the States mendicants. This is a very misleading description, if I may say so. The Centre is neither monarch nor mother-in-law as some other people sometimes call it. But as I have done previously, I would like to register a protest on behalf of all mothers-in-law in attributing such motives to them.

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A good step-mother can be just like a mother*. I do not think we should make such generalisations. Both under the statute and in the way in which we have worked, the Centre and the States are co-workers in development and co-sharers in responsibilities.

* Referring to Smt. Yashoda Reddy's remark, "Step-mother".

Now, the hon. Shri A.P. Jain spoke with experience and authority on the problems of development in the rural areas. He listed four important factors which give new life to land. I should like to add a fifth factor which, I think is equally important, and that is land reform. I am sure we know that in the implementation of land reforms, the Centre can only prod, exert and persuade, and this we are doing.

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Shri M.P. Bhargava and Prof. Saiyid Nurul Hasan, both, referred to the affairs of the CSIR, I share their concern and I confess that I feel that there can be nothing more unscientific than when scientists quarrel among themselves. As I have said on previous occasions, there are many contributing factors to this and one of them is that whether scientists or administrators, we are all human beings and we all suffer from certain human failings. This is not the occasion to go into the problems of the C.S.I.R. However, I would only like to say that we are looking into them. Many scientists are helping us in this matter and we hope that we can sort out things soon.

Prof. Nural Hasan mentioned one other matter, that is, the protection of our archaeological monuments. The Government certainly has a great responsibility in protecting these monuments and all our national treasures. But some of the monuments are in such remote places that the citizen and especially those citizens who have interest in this matter should share some of the burden. I think that we should try to educate every citizen to become a protector of our architectural treasures and also of our wild life which is a treasure of another sort and which is fast diminishing.

Sir, I am intensely aware of the complexity of the financial problems which affect our economy. A single Budget cannot by itself make any serious dent on these problems. In spite of the criticism about the various aspects of the Budget in this House and outside the fact remains that this Budget has evoked the kind of response which no Budget in recent years has evoked.

There is all-round recognition–although in some quarters it is most reluctant–that in this Budget there is the minimum possible contradiction between what it professes and what it has actually set out to achieve. It will be the continuous endeavour of my Government to bridge the gap between profession and practice.

Sir, may I just add a word with regard to Gujarat ? This House has had a discussion, I believe, yesterday and today, and Dr. Sen has said a few words on the subject. We are all deeply distressed at this natural calamity which has caused suffering to so many people. We have sent some help, as a token until we get further news of what is required. Our heart-felt sympathy goes out to the Government and the people of Gujarat and especially to those families who have suffered from this disaster.

New Steel Plants*

...The fourth Five Year Plan has a provision of Rs. 110 crore for the development of new steel plants during the current Plan period. Government have decided that work should be started during this Plan period on two integrated plants for the production of mild steel, and the third one for special steels. Various alternative sites have been examined for this purpose both from the point of view of techno-economic suitability and from that of regional development.

Taking into account the advantage of locating a steel plant in the proximity of a port, which should facilitate the export of steel products as well as the import, to the extent necessary, of the required raw materials, Government have decided that one of the new steel plants which is to be taken up during the Fourth Plan period should be located in the coastal region of Visakhapatnam.

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There are vast resources of iron ore of high quality around Hospet which in the absence of a steel plant in the area are, at present, being utilised only partially for export purposes. To use this raw material resource-adequately, and at the same time, to develop the industrial potential of the area, it has been decided that a steel plant should be constructed in the Hospet area in the State of Mysore.

The proposed plants at Hospet and Visakhapatnam will mainly produce mild steel. There is, however, a considerable demand in the country for special steels and a good deal of this demand is from the States of Tamil Nadu and Mysore, where there are a large number of consuming units for such steel, engaged in the manufacture of engineering goods, including automobiles and automobile ancillaries. To meet this demand, and also to encourage further industrial development of the area, Government have decided to locate a special steel plant in the District of Salem based on the local iron and Neyveli lignite.

Government propose to initiate the necessary preliminary work on these three steel plants within the Fourth Plan period and with the utmost expedition.

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* Intervening in the debate on the Demands for Grants, Ministry of Steel and Heavy Engineering, 1970-71, *L.S. Deb.*, 17 April, 1970, cc. 239–41.

It has already started*. As the new steel plants are to be designed by Indian engineers and the equipment is to be manufactured in India, the programme of construction and erection will have to be suitably drawn up to fit in with the availability of technical personnel and the manufacturing capacities of the engineering units which would be called upon to supply the bulk of the equipment for these plants.

With the growing strength of the country's industry and economy, the demand for steel will progressively increase in future. On a modest estimate, it is expected that the capacity for steel-making will have to be doubled every ten years. New steel plants may, therefore, have to be erected apart from the three now decided.

As regards the location of future steel plants, we are fortunate in having a number of other sites which are *prima facie* suitable for such development. These will be taken into consideration in the process of rapid development of the steel industry which we now envisage.

* Replying to a Member who asked, "When does the Fourth Plan start ?"

Finance Bill, 1970*

Sir, I move.

"That the Bill to give effect to the financial proposals of the Central Government, for the financial year 1970-71, be taken into consideration."

I had outlined the main features of the proposals contained in the Bill in my Budget speech. The details of the specific provisions in the Bill have also been set forth in the Explanatory Memorandum circulated to hon. Members, along with the Budget papers. Hence, it is hardly necessary to go over the ground again. On the present occasion, I should like merely to explain the principal changes that are proposed to be introduced in the provisions of the Bill. In deciding on these changes, the valuable suggestions made by hon. Members and others, during the past eight weeks have been taken into account.

The Central objective of the Budget proposals has been widely appreciated both in this House and outside. There is little reason, therefore, to disturb the general structure of the fiscal proposals in the Bill. The Bill gives concrete shape to the task of reconciling the need for augmented revenues for developmental purpose, with that of using the fiscal device for furthering distributive justice. Through these amendments, I propose to suggest a few changes which would make the fiscal proposals in certain instances more rational, and, in certain other cases, more purposive to achieve the stated goals.

I shall start with direct taxes. The relevant proposals in the Bill, while aiming to reduce the more extreme forms of income inequalities and to plug loopholes in the law leading to tax avoidance, also take care to provide greater incentives to savings and investments. The Bill makes provision to exempt from tax income upto Rs. 3000 in a year, derived from invesments in certain specified categories of financial assets : investments in such assets upto Rs. 1.5 lakhs are also being exempted from wealth tax. It is now proposed to include into those categories of investments also the deposits with State Financial Corporations and other approved long-term financial institutions, this is being done to enable these equally worthy institutions also to attract deposits from members of the public for nation-building purposes.

The tax on the interest payable by banks to their constituents is at present deductible at source. In the context of the Government's policy to extend significantly the coverage

* While moving the Finance Bill and replying to the debate on it, *L.S. Deb.*, 1, 5 and 6 May, 1970, cc. (respectively), 249-57, 276-85 and 350-53.

of banking to rural areas, it would be justifiable to alter this arrangement on administrative grounds. I propose to amend the relevant provision in the Income Tax Act so as to exempt, from deduction of tax at source, the interest earned from deposits with banking companies, including co-operative banks.

In regard to charitable and religious trusts, the Bill makes certain changes in the existing law so as to check abuses which have come to light, and reduce the scope for the use of these trust funds to acquire control of industry and business in which author and his relatives are interested. These provisions in the Bill have been widely acclaimed, and there is no reason to make any major changes in the proposals. At the same time, while replying to the general discussion on the Budget, I did indicate that we would try to remove any genuine difficulties, which may be faced by the affected parties in complying with some of the conditions introduced in the Bill. Under the Bill, the facility enjoyed earlier by a charitable or religious trust to accumulate 25 per cent of its current income has been withdrawn. However, as hon. Members are aware, there is already a provision in the existing law where by such a trust can accumulate its current income without attracting tax liability for a maximum period of 10 years, for purposes authorised under the terms of the trust, provided the funds so accumulated are invested in Government securities. It has been brought to my notice that the requirement to invest the accumulated income exclusively in Government securities is unduly restrictive, in that the funds so invested, would not be readily available to the trust in times of natural calamities like floods and earthquakes; this restriction may also involve risk of loss when the investments are needed to be disposed of before maturity. In order to remove this unintended hardship, I now propose to amend the relevant provision in the Bill so as to allow the investment of accumulated income also in the form of deposits with the post office saving banks, with banking companies including co-operative banks, as well as with approved long-term financial institutions such as State Financial Corporations.

Under the Bill, a charitable or religious trust is liable to forfeit the exemption from tax on its income, if the income or property of the trust is used to provide direct or indirect benefit to the author of the trust or his relatives. The Bill sets forth examples of transactions which would be regarded as providing indirect benefits. A trust or institution which engaged in any of these transactions at any time during the previous year relevant to the assessment year 1971-72, would forfeit the exemption from tax on its income for that year. As the previous year relevant to the assessment year 1971-72, could at the option of the trust, be the financial year 1970-71 or the calender year 1970 or the year ending on Diwali in October, 1970, or even the year ending on 30th June, 1970, trusts which may already have engaged in these prohibited transactions before the announcement of the Budget proposals on February 28, 1970, would normally forfeit exemption from tax on their current income. Such a result would be unintended in the case of religious trusts as also in the case of the charitable trusts established before April 1, 1962, since the proposals in the Budget could not have been anticipated. I therefore propose to provide that in the case of such trusts, any use of the trust income or income or property to provide direct or indirect benefits to the author, founder or any of his relatives in relation to any period upto 31st May, 1970 would not entail forfeiture of the exemption from tax on their current income.

Another circumstance specified in the Bill, which would lead to a complete forfeiture of the exemption from tax, is the investment of the trust funds, in any concern in which the author or founder of the trust or any of his relatives has a substantial interest, and the amount of the investment exceeds 5 per cent of the capital of that concern. In order to comply with the provision, a fairly large number of trusts and institutions would have to change their pattern of investments in order that they do not forfeit the exemption from tax on their current income. It has been represented that, unless a certain minimum time is allowed for the rearrangement of investments, there would be danger of widespread capital loss, since any sudden rush for the sale of such shares in the market, could have a depressing effect on share prices. In order to remove any *bona fide* difficulties, which trust may face in complying with this provision, I propose to allow them time upto 31st December, 1970, to alter suitably their portfolio of investment.

A related minor change is also proposed to be introduced. As I have just explained a charitable trust, under the proposals in the Bill, is liable to forfeit completely, the exemption from tax on its income if its funds are invested in any concern in which the author, founder or any of his relatives has a substantial interest. However where the amount of investment does not exceed 5 per cent of the capital of that concern, such a trust would lose its exemption, only in respect of the income derived from that investment. But persons making donations to such an institution are liable to forfiet the tax relief which they would otherwise be entitled to obtain in respect of their donations. It is proposed to introduce a specific provision, that persons making donations to a trust will continue to be eligible for tax relief, so long as the quantum of investment in any of the prohibited concerns does not exceed 5 per cent of the capital of such concerns.

Under the Bill, capital gains arising from the transfer of agricultural land situated within the limits of any municipality or Cantonment Board, which has a population of not less than 10,000 persons, will hereafter, be subjected to income tax. However, there will be instances, where agricultural lands in such municipal or other urban areas are held for *bona fide* agricultural proposes, often as the main source of livelihood. Where the holder of such land sells it, but acquires some other land elsewhere, in order to continue his agricultural occupation, it would be justifiable to exempt from tax, the capital gain arising to him, out of such a transaction; an amendment is being introduced to this end.

Under the provisions of the Bill, discretionary trust–often created in order to evade or avoid taxation–are to be taxed at a flat rate of 65 per cent on their incomes and 1.5 per cent on their wealth, or at the rates, applicable to individuals, whichever is higher. However, I had said in my Budget speech that steps would be taken to exempt certain categories of exiting discretionary trusts from taxation at these flat rates. The provisions will not apply to trusts, created by employers for the benefit of their employees, such as provident funds, superannuation funds, gratuity funds, pension funds, etc; the necessary amendments are being moved.

I now refer to an amendment to the Wealth Tax. Until now, a farm house was exempt from the Wealth Tax, irrespective of the value of the house. Under a proposal in the Bill, such exemption would henceforth be limited to Rs. 1 lakh. For persons having extensive

agricultural holdings, however, there may be farm houses situated in the midst of such holdings, the value of which may even exceed Rs. 1 lakh such persons may also own a residential house apart from the farm house. As the maintenance of a farm house is essential to direct agricultural operations. I propose to restore the *status quo ante*, and exempt altogether such a house from the liability under the Wealth Tax, irrespective of value.

We now come to the proposals in the Bill regarding indirect taxation. May I stress again what I have said in my budget speech and in my reply to the general discussion on the Budget ? In the present circumstances, we can scarcely ignore the role, which indirect taxes can play in broadening and strengthening the fiscal system. The major aim of fiscal proposals, with respect to indirect levies, is to augment our export effect, discourage the consumption of certain items, and protect the interests of the poorer sections of the community. I do not believe that the package of proposals will disturb the general price stability either. Representations have, however, been made about the likely effects of some individual proposals. These have received our most careful consideration, and we propose to introduce a number of modifications, particularly to remove any hardships which the manufactures in the small scale sector may encounter.

A number of representations have been received from the decentralised sector of the art silk industry, expressing concern over the difficulties, which they think might arise with the declaration of values for purposes of assessment. It has also been urged that the price limit of Rs. 2.50 per sq. metre, upto which the rate of duty would be 3 per cent *ad valorem* does not ensure that the common man's fabrics are taxed at a level, not exceeding the specific rates effective before the budget proposals. It is now proposed to fix tariff values, for the assessment of most varieties of art silk fabrics, which would simplify the process of aseessment. At the same time, the slab up to which the effective rate of duty is to be 3 per cent, is proposed to be raised from Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 3.00 per sq. metre. It is also proposed to give a reduction of 5 per cent in the duty chargeable on fabrics, processed by "independent processors" when the grey cloth brought to such processing houses, is delivered to the owner, after processing, in an uncut condition.

Hon. Members will recall that I had proposed the levy of 20 per cent duty on television sets with great reluctance. At the present stage of our economy, only the relatively better-off can afford a television set, but television has an educative value in our conditions, and as the TV manufacturing industry is in its infancy, I feel that the balance of advantage lies in levying a some what lower duty than was originally proposed. I, therefore, propose to reduce the excise duty on this item from 20 per cent to 10 per cent *ad valorem*. To provide a further stimulus to the indigenous industry, certain other ancillary measures, such as reviewing the facilities provided under the existing Baggage Rules, and ouner regulations, which enable television sets to be brought into the country in large numbers, without the payment of duty, are being considered.

The abolition of export duty on tea has generally been welcomed. The increase in the zonal excise duties has, however, brought forth a large number of representations from tea producers, especially those among the weaker sectors, who stand to benefit less from the export duty reduction, but whose excise duty liability has gone up, because of the

predominance of internal sales over their export sales. There does not seem to be any justifiable case for an overall reduction of excise duties. However, some changes are necessary in the incidence of duty, on those gardens, which are small or the quality of whose tea is inferior, and fetches low prices. In proposing modifications in the levy, I have kept in view the special problems of the small tea gardens in the Nilgiri district, and also in the Assam and Darjeeling areas. I propose to limit the excise duty incidence to 70 paise per kg. in respect of tea cleared in the rest of the financial year 1970-71 which is sold at a price not exceeding Rs. 5 per kg. The details of procedure to give effect to this concession, are being worked out, and will be notified separately. In addition, the 10% reduction in excise duty available to cooperative factories is being extended to 'bought-leaf' factories.

I now turn to a few of the excises to proposed on commodities, where a sizeable production is in the small-scale sector. It is my intention to make these provisions, the least onerous for the small manufactures. I, therefore, propose to exempt wholly from excise duty, the production of metal containers, safes and strong boxes by units which do not use power. I also propose to exempt from excise duty, units which manufacture safes and strong boxes upto a value of Rs. 50,000, provided, that the total annual output of such a unit does not exceed Rs. 2 lakhs in value. This exemption will also extend to the manufactures of biscuits. In the case of metal containers, the exemption limit is being fixed at a still higher level of Rs. 1 lakh, since the value of such containers would include the component of duty paid on tin plate used as raw material.

I should not like the cause of education to suffer, hence mathematical boxes, geometry boxes and colouring boxes used for students and children, irrespective of whether those are manufactured in the organised of small scale sector, will also wholly be exempted, from excise duty.

It is necessary to clarify, and in some instances, marginally alter, the fiscal proposals in respect of pasteurised butter, refrigerating and air-conditioning appliances, and plastics. Pasteurised butter, which is used in the same factory, either for making ghee or for re-constituting into milk, will not be charged to duty. Apart from the concession extended to components, intended for the setting up of air conditioning plants in hospitals, room-and package-type air-conditioners, also, if they are installed in hospitals, will get the benefit of exemption from the increases proposed in the Budget. Cold storage plants already enjoy a concessional rate of duty, this concession is being extended to fish-freezing plants. In the case of plastics, certain anomalies resulting from the proposed levy only P.V.C. sheets are being rectified.

I should like to clarify that it was not our intention to bring sago, vermicelli and arrowroot, within the purview of the excise levy on prepared and 'preserved foods'. Similarly, the levy on aerated water is confined only to products, which are manufactured with the aid of power, and are marketed with a registered brand name or trade mark.

As hon. Members are aware, in order to stimulate the handloom sector of the cotton textile industry, we have already made effective an exemption from excised duty, of hank yarn of counts less than 40 N.F. and reduced considerably the duty on hank yarn of higher

counts. I now propose to extend the provision of total exemption to hank yarn in plain straight reels for counts other than 51 N.F.

Lastly I come to the representations made be certain sections of the book—trade regarding the adjustments proposed in the postal tariffs, particularly regarding V.P.P. fees. As the proposed increase in fees on items of lesser value is rather steep. I propose that the V.P.P. charges be retained at 10 paise for all packets upto Rs. 10 in value.

The changes proposed in direct taxes are not expected to have any significant impact on revenue. The adjustment in excise duties would imply a reduction in revenue to the extent of Rs. 1.80 crore of which, about one-half would be because of the changes related to tea. The effect of the change in the V.P.P. rates would be approximately Rs. 8 lakhs.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, may I conclude by saying that we have made an effort to remove the genuine difficulties, which might have arisen because of some of the measures proposed for direct and indirect taxation. In so doing, we have accepted a marginal sacrifice of resources. I know that this will not satisfy all hon. Members. However, we cannot escape from the stern obligation to mobilise resources for our development. Such a mobilisation imposes burdens on all sections of our people and calls for sacrifices. But we have sincerely endeavoured to ensure that the burdens do not fall heavily on those who are least able to bear them.

Sir, I move.

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*Mr. Speaker, Sir, I should like to thank and congratulate the hon. Member who have spoken in the course of the discussion, for having maintained a high level of debate and focussed the attention of the House on the features of the Finance Bill. I am particularly glad that the debate has been free from acrimony, wild accusations and personal attacks except for two of my hon. friends opposite.

Hon. Members have displayed commendable forensic skill. Some of it was wasted, for it merely traversed the ground already covered during the general discussions on the Budget.

Before I deal with some of the specific points raised, for example, by Shri Dandeker, Shri Shantilal Shah and Shri Kothari, I should like once more to remind hon. Members of the rationale of the original Budget proposals. The Budget, as Dr. Nayar said just now, is an expression of the Government's political will; it sets forth what the Government aspires to do, and details the measures, fiscal or otherwise, that are considered necessary to fulfil these aspirations. We have to restore the impulse of growth to the nation; there has been a veil of economic stagnation in recent years and this must be lifted. Investments in the economy must therefore be properly augmented so that income and employment can both

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* While replying to the debate on 5 May, 1970.

rise. There is no escape from the fact that in order to restore the impulse of growth, it will be necessary to raise additional resources for the public sector. The proportion of public savings to national income has to be raised and in order to do so, the proportion of public revenue to national income has also to be raised. Certain short-term sacrifices are involved in the process, but if the country has to advance at an accelerated rate, we cannot possibly flinch from the task of raising additional revenue, however disagreeable inconvenient this might be to some.

But this additional taxation must not be at the cost of the other objective we have placed before ourselves, that is, a progressive reduction in inequalities, which are at present rampant in our society, with respect to incomes, wealth and consumption. I do not think that there is any need to apologize for the general structure of the taxes proposed in the Budget. Given the limits set, in the short period to available resources, we cannot, in the course of a single year, ensure that income and employment are expanded at a tremendously faster rate. But the general intent in the Budget is unmistakable. As I have said on other occasions, a beginning has been made through various programmes to expand employment opportunities and to narrow the more blatant income inequalities.

Some hon. Members opposite have bewailed the fact that this year we have further enhanced the taxation rate on the upper ranges of personal incomes. Their concern is probably sincere, but everything depends on the angle from which one views it. Comparison with other countries has little meaning, for even if one takes into account the *per capita* income levels, our nation, is in the overall, one of the least taxed in the world, and even the high marginal rates of taxation for personal incomes get considerably reduced after the various exemptions are allowed.

Shri Dandeker is worried about the impact of various excises and the proposed deficit financing on the level of prices and on the cost of living of the common people. The worry is well-intentioned, even though not based on fiscal reality. May I repeat yet again that in framing the proposal for excise levies, I have taken the maximum care to ensure that the burden on the poorer sections of the community, will be the lightest.

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That is true but it cannot be avoided. *All one can do, is to try to make it less than on others.

If excises on refrigerators and tinned fruits and delicacies are levied, I can assure Shri Dandeker that the common people are not affected. If excises on brandy, gin and whisky are increased again, the cost of living of the poorer people does not go up.

Some hon. Members mentioned T.V. Now, the intention is not that the richer people should have more TV sets, but that in the state of our economy, TV could be of tremendous help to the farmer and to the teacher, and this point of view has been kept....

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* Replying to a Member's observation, "But there is burden on them."

Last Friday, I proposed certain special reliefs to help small manufacturers and artisans. Care has also been taken to lower the burden of excise duty on the cheaper varieties of tea generally consumed by the common people. I am as much concerned about prices and for legitimate reasons, as are hon. Members. It is the Government which has to face agitations and protests, if prices start rising...

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The price situation must be continuously watched.

The hon. Member Shri N. Dandeker also alleged that we have over-estimated revenue and that, therefore, deficit financing, in 1970-71 is likely to be of the order of Rs. 450 crore and not Rs. 225 crore. I must disappoint him on this score. The latest figures of revenue collections suggest that even for 1969-70, the budgetary deficit is likely to be much less than the Rs. 290 crore, estimated earlier. One of the major factors for this is an improvement in the collections under income-tax and corporation tax. Since this improvement in the collections for the last year is bound to have a favourable effect on collections during 1970-71 also, there are fair chances that the need for deficit financing can and will be kept down.

Shri Shantilal Shah has paid a compliment though in rather a dubious manner, if I may say so. He admitted the buoyancy of share prices, but found a wrong and farfetched reason for it. Shri N. Dandeker maintained that the initial buoyancy has now begun to collapse. My hon. friend Shri S.R. Damani has effectively countered this statement.

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Now Shri Shah cannot have it both ways. The stock exchange reacted favourably to the budget because despite the usual noises made for the sake of record, it does ensure the cause of healthy corporate growth.

Members of the Swatantra and Jan Sangh complained that our corporate taxation is high, that in fact, it is the highest in the world with few exceptions. They have argued that although the rates of corporate taxation have not been increased, there would be a rise in the incidence of tax on the corporate sector because of the lapsing or diminution of some of the tax concessions so far available. These critics conveniently overlook the several concessions which soften the incidence. Even with the lapsing of the incentives, such as the tax credit certificates or the reduction in the rates of development rebate, the net incidence on the corporate sector will not be affected to any significant extent. Obviously, the development rebate cannot be a permanent part of our tax structure. One has to make a beginning sometime or other to reduce it, With an eye on its ultimate abolition. The intention of Government in this regard was announced as early as 1965. No change has been made in this year's budget.

These hon. Members referred to the withdrawal of deductions for entertainment expenditure. I hope I am not a kill-joy. We are not against companies entertaining people from within the country or abroad. But we do say that this should not count as deductible

expenditure so far as taxation is concerned. Affluent countries such as the U.K. and Canada have decided to do away with the expense account.

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Shri Kothari's other point was that the increase in personal taxation would weigh heavily on intellectuals, professionals and technical people generally. He pleaded for more generous treatment to these classes. Now, one would obviously like to help as many people as one possibly could, but the base of our tax-paying community is so narrow that there is hardly any room for manoeuvrability, and the higher contribution must inevitably come from those in the relatively higher income brackets.

Several Members spoke about charitable trusts. Shri Shantilal Shah suggested that if charitable trusts were to be regulated and abuses eliminated, this should be done by a separate law and not through the instrument of taxation. This is a matter for the States to consider and undertake. What the tax law seeks to do, is to put charitable trusts on notice that they cannot enjoy tax exemption, if at the same time, they use their funds to provide direct or indirect benefits of various kinds to the author and other persons connected with him, instead of using these to serve the purposes for which the trust was established.

I am sure the House will agree that the instrument of taxation is a potent instrument to keep these trusts in line. Some hon. Members deemed it unreasonable to ask charitable trusts to make returns of their income, if they did not have to pay tax. Whether they have to pay tax or not, can be determined only if the trusts furnish the details of their accounts and returns of income, to tax authorities. Even now, some sort of check is exercised when charitable trusts come up for exemption certificates.

Some hon. Members, including Shri Dwivedy, voiced a demand to raise the exemption limit. I can understand the concern of hon. Members for further relief for middle income groups, but I think the figure Shri Dwivedy mentioned was not quite correct, because to raise the exemption limit even to Rs. 6,000 would have meant a further loss of Rs. 18 crore. But I should like them to appreciate that the limit of Rs. 5,000, low as it is in absolute terms, is still quite high in relation to the low level of incomes of a vast majority of our people. Also although the exemption limit is only Rs. 5,000 in effect it is closer to Rs. 6,000, if we take into account the deductions allowed to salaried tax-payers for expenditure incurred on travelling for purposes of employment besides the deductions for certain approved contractual savings such as through life insurance, provident fund etc. On the whole we expect about five lakhs of assessees to be taken off the register of the income tax Department as a result of these changes.

Some hon. Members, and the last speaker also, Dr. Nayar, spoke about the idea which I had thrown out in the presentation of the Budget to combine the incomes of husbands and wives. I had thought to bring greater harmony to married life, and certainly not to put the clock back or in any way to come in the way of women's further emancipation. My intention, as I had said then, was to have a discussion on the subject and to have the views of the Members. There has been discussion and also a spate or representations, some of

which have belied the normal male presumption that only they can put forward a point of view with cogency and vehemence. Anyhow, this does not from part of the Finance Bill.

Many Members have spoken about the problems of different States. I do not think that this is the occasion to go into them. Within the general constraint or resources, the Central Government tries to meet the needs of States to the maximum extent possible, but I should just like to touch on one or two points which were raised. Hon. Member Shri Raj Deo Singh spoke of the housing loan to U.P. and compared it with the loan given to another State. U.P. had drawn Rs. 801 lakhs and spent only Rs. 669.39 lakhs. Normally this rate of expenditure does not justify any further allocation during the current year. Nevertheless, in view of certain special projects, 1 crore has been allocated to U.P.

With regard to West Bengal, we are fully conscious of the very special importance of the problems of Calcutta as well as of rural Bengal. We are pursuing these matters and doing everything possible to expedite surveys and also the implementation of the various schemes.

One hon. Member *spoke about Assam. Perhaps he did not know that the paper mill project which he mentioned has already been sanctioned.

I had thought that with the announcement of three steel plants, we had got rid of this problem at least for some time, but it seems to be very much with us. Hon. Member Shri Dwivedy spoke passionately on the subject, but he was replied to immediately by my friend Shri Naidu on behalf of Andhra Pradesh, and later on when Shri Dwivedy was not in the House, by Shri Viswanatham also.

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Shri Viswanatham has replied to that by saying that it was many years ago, in 1963, when these matters were taken up that a decision was taken for all practical purposes but for some reason it was shelved. In between, there were many troubles, and we did think that we should not take up the projects immediately, but there were complete surveys and much work was done. So, the decision was not a sudden one. As a mater of fact, even after this decision was taken we did not announce it immediately because we wanted to settle various details. I think hon. Members know that the overall working of steel plants has improved Bhilai is now giving profit, and as for Rourkela, Shri Surendranath Dwivedy has referred to it; as hon. Members know, Rourkela is in Orissa, and it has also improved somewhat, although not as much as we would have liked it to do altnough Rourkela also has been expanded.

The agricultural wealth tax was touched upon by many hon. Members. I think that there is some misconception about this. This tax will affect only those whose lands are worth over Rs. 1.5 lakh, over and above the general exemption limit of Rs. 1 lakh of wealth. Therefore, by no stretch of imagination, can one say that it is going to affect the poor farmer.

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* Shri R. Barua.

I agree with the hon. Member* that there are not many rich farmers, but there are rich farmers. The number of non-rich farmers is very much greater, and if we are to help them, then I think that it is in the interests of the richer farmers also to contribute so that the general level in the village and so on increases and makes for greater stability and improvement in the general rural scene.

As regards sugar, the increase in excise duty on levy sugar is only marginal. Even in some zones, because of the readjustment of the prices of levy sugar, in spite of the increase in duty, the prices to consumers have come down. For instance, in the Delhi market, I am told that it has dropped from Rs. 1.94 per k.g. to Rs. 1.78 per k.g. Free sale sugar has also registered a perceptible fall in prices in the post-budget period. As a consequence, retail prices have come down by about 10 to 15 paise per k.g. in spite of the increase in excise duty. In the Delhi market, retail prices of free sale sugar which was round about Rs. 2.10 per k.g. in the immediate pre-budget period has now come down to Rs.1.95 per k.g. With the fall in prices, the tariff value fixed for the collection of duty on free sale sugar has dropped from Rs. 1.50 per k.g. in March to about Rs. 1.20 per k.g. now, and as consequence, in the post-budget period, the duty in absolute terms has fallen by about 11 paise per k.g. However, we are keeping the situation constantly under review.

As I have explained earlier, the object of increasing the excise duty on tea is mainly to make up the substantial loss sustained by the abolition of export duty as well as the grant of partial rebate on quality teas exported. The measure of relief given on export duties has generally been welcomed, as it would help to retain our hold in the foreign market and to improve on our past levels of export in the near future. At the same time, it is necessary to make up the loss, at least partially by levying somthing more on teas which are consumed internally. But here again, as I have said earlier, care has been taken to see that the net duties are left unaffected or only marginally touched. The superior teas, however, will bear a somewhat higher burden, but to the extent that these teas are diverted to the export market, the economy would stand to gain by way of larger foreign exchange earnings. The problem of giving some relief to the weaker sector of the tea industry has also been taken care of. We have recently decided to limit the duty to 70 paise per k.g. in the case of those tea gardens whose average realisation in the past three years on all their sales in the approved auction centres is less than Rs. 5 per kg. The details of these proposals are being worked out and we hope to finalise them quite soon.

There is an impression that if a tax is levied, it means that we are against that industry or occupation or that group of people. This is an erroneous idea, because even though people may be doing something worth-while, they would still have to contribute to helping those who are much worse off than they are.

It is strange that people are against taxes, at the same time, they want more to be done for different sections, for example, for the unemployed. The basic solution to this problem lies in expanded investments all along the line. Employment is a function of economic growth. Private investment on its own has failed to ignite the spark of growth in recent

* Shri Chengalraya Naidu.

years, which is why, in this year's budget, we have purposely provided for nearly 20 per cent increase in public outlay, and have specially planned certain projects which would be biased towards the creation of employment opportunities. I do admit that this marks only a small beginning, and much has to be done before we can catch up with the backlog.

But we must have certain logic in our remarks. If we want more employment we must also accept the imperative need for additional resources. It is not easy to evolve a fiscal system which will, at all points of time, satisfy all sections of the community. But our objective in this year's budget was stated clearly—we must combine the fiscal imperatives of growth with the needs for the maximum social objective achievable in the short period. Also some amendments have been moved, which will make the fiscal proposals more rational and purposive. The proposals are now before the House ; they do not represent all that we would like to do but what is possible in a given situation and in particular circumstances.

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First* of all, I should like to express my appreciation and thanks for the high level of the debate, which Members on all sides of the House have maintained throughout the discussion on the Finance Bill. I should like to thank the hon. Members for the consideration and the courtesy which they showed me throughout the course of this debate. I wish it had been possible for me to respond in a more generous manner to the very useful suggestions which were made by some of them. But hon. Members are aware that our task is a long and arduous one and we have chosen the most difficult manner in which to achieve it; that is, with the consent of the people. And the people's views vary greatly. Each one of us sitting in this House has been elected by the people, and can claim to speak to some extent for the people from where he comes. And yet, we express very divergent views. So, in order to do anything, it is necessary to try and follow a road on which if one cannot take the people wholly with one, one can at least take them partly. This is what we are endeavouring to do. And it is only the imperative needs for the mobilisation of resources, without which we cannot implement our programmes for development and for the progress of the nation, which has made it difficult for the Government to accept some of the suggestions for tax relief. However justifiable these suggestions might, otherwise be.

In the course of the speeches of hon. Members one gets an impression that they regard taxation as a kind of punishment; they say such and such work is deserving such and such group is a good one; and ask why they should be taxed. As I have tried to explain earlier, taxation is only a method by which in a way you get the cooperation of the people. In India we have a tremendous task on our shoulders.

One hon. Member, I think of the Swatantra party, has talked of the burden of taxation. It is true the burden of taxation is there. But there is another burden, the burden that has been on the Indian people for hundreds of years, the burden of poverty, the burden of economic backwardness, the burden of social injustice. These can only be removed if we

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* While concluding the debate on the Finance Bill, 1970, on 6 May, 1970.

can go ahead with certain programmes. We cannot go ahead with them unless all the people cooperate in this task and the people cannot, mean a few of the rich. We have increased the taxation on the richer sections and all day we have heard from one section of the House, how very steep and unbearable this is for them. So, we have made an effort, but it is not enough. Every single person who gets a little more than his brothers and sisters must contribute something for the welfare of those who have less than he has. This is the burden of this budget and this must be the burden of our lives in India.

Somebody talked of a holiday from excise duties. I think it was Shri Viswanatham. I am afraid there can be no holiday for us here. As my father said, these are years of hard work and burdens—financial burdens, work burdens and all kinds of other burdens. This is not the time to let up or sit back. An hon, Member asked, is the person who gets Rs. 7000 rich ? From which angle do you approach the question ? He may not be rich from my angle or from the hon. member's angle, but he is certainly rich from the angle of the adivasi in a remote area of Orissa or Bihar or somewhere else or some of the people who live in the slums here. It is a question of relative richness and relative poverty and relative capacity to bear the burden.

In this budget, we have not tried to spare anybody, because we felt that it was not a burden, but it is really a privilege for people to participate and to help in this great adventure of building a new India. We have heard a lot of talk about incentives. I think there can be no greater incentive than for us to feel that we are ourselves involved in this task. We know sometimes when we collect funds that it is the poorer people who give with the greatest enthusiasm. Quite often they cannot afford what they give. Even when funds were being collected after the fighting on our borders in 1965, if, one compared the earnings of the people with how much they gave, one would have no hesitation in saying that the poorer people gave more than the others. Yet they gave. There was no coercion or even persuasion. They gave because they wanted to be a past of the Defence of India, in strengthening the nation. That is the kind of attitude we want from those who can well afford to give. Therefore, I hope that hon. Members will start this new financial year with this new attitude.

I am glad that some members have spoken of the spirit of cooperation. It is true that nothing at all can be achieved without cooperation. We must try to see how we can all work-together. An hon. Member said—I do not remember who—that I should have an open mind. I think I do have a open mind, but hon. Members will agree that the mind should not be a passage. After considering the problem it has to be closed down on something, on some ideology, on some programme.

As I have said, the fight against poverty and against our many problems is a long one and the work of rebuilding our social structure cannot be accomplished in just a few years. However much we desire it, however hard we work, however much we can mobilise resources, even then it cannot be achieved in just a few years. Disparities cannot be ended immediately. So, it is a long road and each new step needs careful thought and preparation. It is easy enough to say that one should suddenly and immediately sweep away the whole system and the whole establishment as it exists today. It is easy to say, but this also would

exact a heavy price. Would the paying of such price at this moment accelerate our development ? Would that help us move faster or would it delay us ? Today all Members, even those who have criticised us, have pointed out that we are poised for quick advance. Let us take advantage of this situation and work together and in harmony, I am sure that the process of development will gain in tempo and that we will be able to achieve the aims which we have set for ourselves. I do not believe in tall talk; nor have I ever indulged in it. I have not used extravagant phrases regarding what we want to do. On the contrary, I have deliberately under stated what we have to do, so that perhaps, we will be able to do more than that. May I hope that in this task I shall have the understanding cooperation of the whole House ? Once agian I would like to thank you and the hon. Members.

Implementation of Fourth Five-Year Plan*

I move :

That the Fourth Five-Year Plan 1969-74 laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha on the 18th May, 1970 be taken into consideration.

Sir, in previous years, when the Plan was presented to the House, the Prime Minister made an introductory statement outlining the direction and the main features of the Plan. However, I think that this time the situation is somewhat different. We have already discussed the draft Plan and basic approach of the Plan in detail in this House. Its objectives and the policies needed to fulfil those objectives have been outlined in the Plan Document itself. Also I have given my own ideas in the preface to the Plan which was placed on the Table of the House some days ago. I feel, therefore, that, perhaps it would be more useful if I gave this extra time to the House, to the Members, to place their views before us and, later on, in the course of my reply to the debate, I shall try to touch upon the objectives, the priorities of the Plan and what contribution the Plan may be expected to make to the solution of the important problem which faces us. However, with your permission and the permission of the members, I should like to make one or two points about the Plan. I would like to draw the attention of Members to the revised Plan which envisages an increase of Rs. 1500 crore on public sector programmes. It is true that part of this increase is on account of certain accounting adjustments but the more significant part of it is because of new programmes. The State Plans have been increased by Rs. 540 crore and the Central Plan has an additional provision of Rs. 545 crore in support of State programmes through various organisations such as the Agricultural Refinance Corporation, the Law Development Corporation, the Rural Electrification Corporation and so on. Whenever we have discussed the Plan, the Members have pointed out that the Plan falls short of what needs to be done. This is true. I myself have made this comment that it does fall short not only of what we need in the country but of what the people expect us. But the very process of planning means phased development. We have before us stupendous problems. Also the needs of the people are not static, they are constantly growing. But we have limited resources. We have to balance our needs against the available resources and hence, a situation arises where quite often we have to postpone certain items which we all consider important and essential, because of the limitation of resources. Thus we are in a continuous stage or process of enlarging the Plan. The Plan is not a grandiose one. It has tried to be realistic and it strives to make a modest contribution to the fulfilment of our twin objectives, that is, of Growth

* While moving a Motion for taking into consideration the Fourth Five-Year Plan, *R.S. Deb.*, 11 August, 1970, cc. 207-08.

and along with it, Social Justice. This Plan spells out the minimum tasks which are expected of the nation, and which we can achieve if we have the will to do so. I hope that the discussion here will generate and give the impression of our will and determination to fulfil the targets of the Plan and even, if we can, over-fulfil them I know, Sir, the hon. Members are greatly interested in this Plan and I also know that their suggestions and comments will be valuable.

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Mr. Deputy Chairman,* the debate on planning is a truly national occasion, and I am glad that hon. Members have taken it seriously even though there has been much criticism. We have got used to such criticism. First it used to be on the very concept of planning. Fortunately that stage is over and we have come to a phase of development when all parties, I hope, approve of the idea of planning. Some have approved of some portions of the Plan but have reserved their criticism for the manner in which many programmes have been implemented. There are some who do not at all approve of the manner in which we plan. Now, obvisouly, each one of us, that is, not as individuals but as representatives of parties, stand for certain ideas and for certain methods of functioning. We have, after considerable thought and deliberation, decided on the sort of Planning Commission which we should have and manner on which it should function. The Planning Commission consists of independent, non-party, non-political experts but even they are not solely responsible for the Plan. The Plan is drawn up on the basis of numerous discussions with people at different levels, every single State and the Plan takes its final shape in the National Development Council in which all the Chief Ministers, and many of them belonging to different parties, sit together and express their views. It is true that at these meetings there is also disagreement, not normally on the method of planning but more about how much each State should get. We all know that none of our programmes is adequate for our population or for our needs. At all times there has to be balancing between available resources and what our people need, what we think should be done for them or even what should be done for one area or another. By and large, the Plan is a charter of progress for the next four years. We have some idea of how it has functioned already since it has been in existence for a year. Although this formal discussion on the final Plan is taking place now, we have had a very useful debate when the Plan was settled in its drafts stage. An hon. Member has said that there was no sense of urgency in the Plan. I think that this is the difference between the Draft Plan and the final document.

We have tried to inject a sense of urgency in the final document, and the proof of it is that it has recognised the major problems of the day, whether it is unemployment or regional imbalances or other major problems. Yesterday or the day before yesterday, I mentioned the increased outlay both for the public sector and for the State Plans. We do realise, and I think the Plan realises, that the solution to some of these problems brooks no delay and they must be tackled with urgency and with determination. But there are certain conditions in which we must work. The hon. Member, Shri Kaul, drew attention to this when he spoke

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* While replying to the debate on the Motion, *R.S. Deb.*, 13 August, 1970, cc. 221-35.

just now. There are certain accepted parameters. One is the democratic process. Many people would like us to do many things, some of which, we also agree, are the right things to do. But we are committed to the democratic process. We are committed to securing the consent of the people. We are committed to trying to take along with us as many of the people and as many of the parties as possible. And sometimes this does slow the process, but I think that, even though it makes the process slower, it strengthens the process and it strengthens whatever work we take in hand. Now the second parameter, with which perhaps some people do not agree, but which is one which we have set for ourselves, is that of a mixed economy. A mixed economy may have many faults, but in the circumstances in the country, our Government, those who preceded me and those who are my colleagues today, feel that this is one of the conditions which we must set ourselves. I do not think that 'a mixed economy' means merely that some big families should be allowed to take advantage. Because many of the fields—whether it is agriculture, or small scale industry—are in the private sector, but for the benefit of the smaller man. This is our concept of a mixed economy, namely, that people should be able to take many programmes in hand and work for themselves. I know that some families, some groups, some business houses, have taken advantage of a particular situation as it arose immediately after independence. It is our endeavour now to see how we can curb this kind of monopolistic tendency. It is not possible suddenly, in the circumstances in which we are, to put a sudden brake. You cannot say that a particular situation should be changed overnight. It has to be done in a way which gives the least shock to the economy. But it must also be done in a way which lessens the delay. By lessening the shock, I do not mean that we go so slow that our programmes become ineffective, because that would be defeating the very purposes for which we are making new programmes. But it does mean that, along with the desire for social justice which is surely a genuine desire–the practical needs of the country today must be attended to, the needs of production and growth as well, so that they enable us to give greater social justice. There was another point made by hon. Shri Kaul, which was that with all these different types of criticism there was no clear alternative put forward by any hon. Member. There is a party which has put an alternative on previous occasion and I shall say something about it later on.

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Sometimes it is said here that the Plan is made by city-dwellers and therefore perhaps they have no idea of agricultural problems. We have in the Planning Commission agricultural experts, and in drawing up the Plan they are in touch with many more people all over the country who are actually working in the field or who are themselves concerned with the day to day problems of the rural areas. Although, I myself happen to be born not in a city but in a town, it is one of those hundreds of small towns in India which are very close to the rural areas and which are constantly in touch with the problems of the rural areas. My own earliest memories are not only of visits to villages but of thousands, if not lakhs, of peasants, with and without their families, coming to our house to discuss their problems and to put their difficulties in front of my father and the many other political leaders who were often in our house. Therefore this was my earliest memory of the political struggle in India and of the problems of the Indian peasant. So in a way, I have grown up

with a very full and deep awareness of the problems of the *kisan,* of his hopes and his aspirations. Now, realise that the implementation of land reforms is inextricably linked with any question of social justice for the rural population. In these last twelve months we have tried to mount pressure from all sides so that we could go ahead with many of these programmes, some laws which have been passed but have not been implemented, others which have yet to take the form of enactments. I do not know whether there is time to go into details of these reforms, but I have spoken of them on other occasions. What I would like to say is that we do realise the importance of land reform and when we met the Chief Ministers or the Agricultural Ministers of the States we have given them a time-bound programme. So we are going ahead with this. In the State under President's rule, we have tried to set an example by pushing ahead even faster. But we cannot slur over the legal, constitutional and sometimes political difficulties which State Governments, whether they are of the Congress or of the other parties, have faced when they have set about implementing land reforms, and it is these difficulties which have to some extent slowed down the pace of implementation. But my own assessment is that these difficulties are increasingly being got over and the State Governments are now displaying a greater sense of urgency and earnestness in enforcing land reforms.

Now, some parties represented here have taken another method of enforcing land reforms. I must confess that this is not a right method. It is not a right method, because I do not think that it even gives justice in the long run. It is not a right method, because it is based on feelings of hatred, of envy and even of the promotion of the acquisitive spirit.

One hon. Member belonging to my own party, I believe, said one of these day that had I not been in office, perhaps I myself would have led the land grab movement. I must seriously repudiate this statement. I do not wish to associate myself with anything which will increase lawlessness and the tendency to grab things. In this connection, people brought in Gandhi's name. They brought in the memory of the freedom struggle. But the conditions were entirely different. I had the privilege of being close to Gandhiji, and I know that he would not approve of any kind of movement like this or any kind of grabbing. We were then living under a system which did not permit any kind of change, as we were under the British regime.

Often many things had to be done which perhaps one would not normally approve of, but today change is possible. People have shown that they do change. They have voted for other ideas. They have voted for other parties. They have brought governments of different hues and views into power. Therefore, all those who are committed to democratic methods should abide by these rules and processes of democracy.

Of course, there were some suggestions made for the efficient implementation of land reforms which, in my view, are eminently reasonable. Some Members suggested that peoples representatives at the village level should be associated with the enforcement of land legislation. The central problem which faces our democracy today, and which was touched upon by many members who spoke, is the problem of how to have the people's participation in the implementation of Plan and especially in some of these programmes which affect them very closely. No one can sit back and relax thinking that, having elected

the Government or having given the vote to the people, their participation in the processes of Government will be automatically ensured. We have to work actively for such participation and to build up public opinion. But there must be a common understanding between us all and acceptance of the fact that changes will be brought about through persuasion and peaceful means and that consensus will not be brought about by the welding of the big stick by any one. I do not approve of the grabbing, because I feel that it is not possible to promote understanding in these conditions.

The other question, which has been agitating hon. Members for some time, is the Government's Industrial Licensing Policy and the role of the large industrial houses. I have just touched upon this without mentioning the world licensing earlier on. We do stand committed to an equitable distribution of wealth and income, but equally we must have production and growth because without this we cannot make an impact on the great poverty in our country. The House should look at the Industrial Licensing Policy as a whole and its total impact on the economy. As hon. Members know, we have reserved a large field for small scale industry and a far larger field for small and medium entrepreneurs. It is only in respect of the core sector and heavy investment sector that large industrial houses have been allowed to come in. If the managerial, financial and technical resources of the public sector as they exist today were unlimited, then certainly we could have taken a decision here and now that this field should be completely reserved for the public sector and that no licences should be given to the large industrial houses.

But we know that the situation is not such. The public sector has grown considerably and we want to build it up to a position of commanding influence in our economy. But in respect of projects in the core sector which the public sector is not in a position to take up because of want of financial or technical or other resources, the choice before us is either to import what we need or else to allow some of the these bigger industrial houses to come in and give the country the benefit of higher production and employment. No decision has been taken which is in conflict with the objectives of our licensing policy. Government has at its disposal adequate powers to regulate, to control and direct the large industrial houses and to ensure that they function in conformity with national interests. We are looking at this problem constantly, and where we have gone wrong is because the circumstances were such that some people were able to take advantage of the situation. We do keep a close look at this problem to see how it can be correted. It is our constant direction to all Ministries that these bigger houses must function in conformity with national interests.

The other major question is that concerning the rise in prices. I do not think we have been complacent about the price situation, nor can we afford to be. I am fully conscious of the deep distress that the rise in prices causes to all people but more specially to vulnerable sections such as landless labourers, fixed income groups, and so on. But, let us not be swept off our feet by alarmists who interpret the rise in prices as a prelude to some kind of a galloping inflation. We should get the facts straight about how much rise there is and what items have contributed to this rise, I have the figures for two days, one, the week ending 18th July, 1970, and there the wholesale price index is higher by 3.5 per cent as compared to the price index of a year ago. The other is the wholesale index for the week ending July 25th, and that is higher by 3.3 per cent than its level a year ago for the

same week. The index for foodgrains is lower by 1.5 per cent, and except for rice the prices of all other foodgrains are running lower than last year's level. Government's objective is to hold the prices of four items of family consumption stable.

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While rice prices have shown some increase, that is 1.7 per cent, the prices of wheat, *jowar* and *bajra* are lower than they were on the same week a year ago. So the trend in prices has underlined the crucial importance of taking all steps to stimulate the production of commercial crops. I am glad that mention was made of the importance of cotton. Some of these items have been neglected in the past and we must make every effort to have research and other measures, which were taken with regard to wheat, extended to these other items. Growth with stability will be within our reach if we do not slacken, and if we maintain the rate of progress achieved in agricultural production. That is why we are also pressing ahead with the building up of buffer stocks of foodgrains.

I think some Hon'ble Member rightly mentioned that to some extent in a developing economy prices must go up. He spoke just in time.

We find that the rise in prices is not a phenomenon unique to India but is found in most places in the world today. At the same time, we want to keep the prices down for the consumer. But simultaneously, we have to assure remunerative prices to agricultural producers, that is, maintaining incentive for increased production. In fact, when a statement was made by my colleague, the Finance Minister, the other day in Parliament about the rise in prices and the steps taken to arrange for imports of edible oils, etc., one of the Chief Ministers, not belonging to my party, wrote immediately stressing the need that we should not, in the process, overlook the need to assure remunerative prices to producers. Therefore, at all times you have to try and maintain a balance between the different points of view.

The other major problem is that of unemployment. We have had some little discussion on it this morning and hon. Members were understandably exercised— since they do not like the word 'excited'—that some figures were not given. As I explained then, up to now, the Plans and the National Sample Surveys and other studies have all been giving figures. When I said that they were not correct, I was not expressing my personal view or the view of a particular Ministry or department. The House knows that an Expert Committee was set up to look into this matter. It has come up with the view that they do not think the methods for collecting these figures were right and therefore, they do not think that the figures themselves are correct. And as we know, these various figures given by different bodies are conflicting..... (*Interruptions*). They may be higher or lower. That is not the point. The point is, when we know that the figures are not correct there is not much sense in placing those figures before the House. But this Committee has also set out—it has not also taken a negative attitude—the various steps to be taken immediately whereby we can get more correct figures .....

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We are trying to expedite the work*. We have immediately informed the State Governments and I hope that we will get the figures, even if not of the entire country, at least, in the interim, of the special districts which have been selected for special programmes. At least those figures we should get very soon. Some programmes have been outlined in the Plan for dealing with this problem.

As I said earlier, nobody will claim—and neither does the Plan claim—that it can provide an adequate solution to this problem or that the question of unemployment can be dealt with in this Plan or another, in one stroke. But we have made a beginning by opening out many avenues, schemes for rural employment, and some schemes for urban employment. And we certainly think that these will make some dent in these figures of the unemployed.

I entirely agree with the hon. Members**, who spoke before me, who said that the system of education also needs to be geared up so that the young people who get their degrees can immediately fit into some jobs. But this is such a big problem—the question of changing the educational system. It can only be dealt with on a national scale and with the cooperation of all political parties.

I do not know whether the hon'ble Members would like me to go into these employment schemes. I think, they have been placed before the House. Some of them are Small Farmers' Scheme, Marginal Farmers' Scheme, Agro-Service Centres, Scheme of Rural Works in drought-affected areas, institutional finances through banks, and also something that was in answer to a question which had been put with regard to employment of engineers and so on. As I said, all these schemes are there. But they are far from adequate. They mark a beginning. Apart from giving employment to a certain number, what is more important is that it will give an opening for young people to use initiative in creating jobs for themselves. This must be so in any developing nation to enable it to grow, and to advance. Young people must learn how to make the best use of any adversity. It was out of the drought situation, that much of our agricultural strategy developed to enable our farmers to go ahead much faster. The strategy was accepted by farmers because they found themselves in a difficult situation where only a change in methods could help them out. So they immediately adopted this change in methods. Therefore, a difficult problem can help to reorient our thinking and the thinking of our young people so that they get more resourceful and use their initiative. There are many opportunities for self-employment in our country. There are many villages which need services. They are willing to pay for the services and these services could be provided by the unemployed. But today there is a feeling of insecurity in taking up such jobs. The banks are helping young people. Even so, there is some hesitation. I hope this state of affairs will soon change as indeed it is already changing.

Now, I said earlier that nobody had given an alternative Plan. And some friends opposite there called out that they had got what they call a Swadeshi Plan. Of course, the word "Swadeshi" like all words is sometimes stretched to have all kinds of meaning. The present

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* Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's question, "By what time would you get?"

** Shri Bipinpal Das.

Plan, as it is today, requires a 28 per cent, increase in income to be ploughed back for investment. It calls for mobilisation of resources of Rs. 3,200 crores and most of us here feel that it is a very difficult task. This so-called Swadeshi Plan calls for a marginal saving rate of 40 to 50 per cent and involves a mobilisation of additional resources to the tune of Rs. 9,600 crores over the five-year period, that is, an additional taxation of Rs. 1,600 crores in a single year.

In a children's classic there is mention of a "Never, Never Land". It seems to me that some people live in the "Never, Never Land". For them the solution of all problems seems to be easy. They say, "Cut out foreign aid, have levies on imports, have a pie in the sky and a bomb in the pocket and you will solve the problems of economic growth, employment, self-reliance and security all in one stroke." Exponents of this philosophy are welcome to practise it if ever they have the opportunity of doing so. I personally feel that they will soon discover that they have been deluding themselves, if not others.

A question which I have not so far mentioned is the question of the importance given to agriculture. The Government is fully aware of the importance of agriculture. Agriculture, as we all know, and as hon'ble Members have said, contributes 50 per cent. of the national income and provides livelihood for about 70 per cent. of our people. Apart from the outlay shown under the heading "Agricultural Production", funds are being provided on a large scale through various co-operatives, banks and so on. And also much of what is put under programmes such as production of fertilisers, rural electrification, etc. are intended to build up our agriculture. More pump sets were energised during the three years of the Annual Plan than were in position in 1966. In the Fourth Plan 1.25 million pump sets are proposed to be energised. The number of pump sets energised will thus be doubled in the five-year period.

My good friend, sitting opposite me, here said that the Plan was out of date. Perhaps it is his information which is out of date. So far as we know, in the first year of the Plan the projected rate of growth, *i.e.* 5.5 per cent, has been achieved. The food production has been 100 million tonnes and industrial production increased by 7 per cent. Therefore, the economy should grow at the rate of 5.5 per cent as estimated in the Plan. While reference was made to the downward revision of some targets, for instance fertilizers and petroleum crude, other items where the targets have been raised, were conveniently ignored.

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Shrimati Punshpaben made some very useful points about animal husbandry, especially about the difficulties of the nomadic tribes, and grasslands, and also about cutting down of forests or jungles. These are very real problems, especially that of forests, because in our desire and in our earnestness to help our landless, we should not make the great mistake of cutting down more forests. As it is, we have cut down far more forest land than we should have done and this has adversely affected the areas round about. It has affected rainfall and created many new problems. So each problem has to be seen alongside with many others. If we just try to solve one problem by itself, quite often new problems are created, which create difficulties even for the original problem. Shrimati Pushpaben was

perhaps understandably emotional about the adoption of some of our children by foreigners. Now, I myself am not in favour of our children being adopted by foreigners. But the number of such children is exceedingly small. I can assure her that those few who have been adopted abroad, that I know of, are living in good conditions, and that reports are got by the agencies through whom the adoption takes place about the condition of health and how the child is growing up. We are in a position to know that the child is not being ill-treated. The answer is not to stop these few adoptions, but to try and persuade our own people to adopt such children. It is no life for these children to live in some of these orphanages. I can say from personal experience that many children in similar conditions just because in some of these orphanages here they do not have love and affection which are as necessary for the growth of a child as are adequate nourishment and shelter. We have a huge task before us to look after these children not through institutions but through love which only a family can give them. In India most adoptions have taken place only because somebody did not have an heir for property or something like that. But these adoptions which are taking place now are because somebody wants to give love and affection to a child. People have gone out of their way to adopt a child that is very ill and often enough the child could not get the necessary treatment there even if we had the money and other equipment. So we must try and change the attitude of our people.

The problem of refugees in West Bengal had been dealt with on previous occasions. I will only say that it is a very real problem and it is indeed a national problem. We do not regard it as a problem merely of West Bengal.

Some honourable Members spoke of disorder. What is happening in the country today might perhaps be called disorder; some of it is disorder. But much of the unrest is a kind of ferment and it is a ferment which is not confined to our country. It is visible in countries where there is no unemployment, where there are no economic difficulties such as our people face. Therefore, it is part of a crisis which is very much deeper. It is a crisis of humanity, a crisis where people are trying to look for something which they have missed. The younger people discard the older values either because they do not approve of them or because they think the older generation has not lived up to their values. It is one or the other. But it is certainly much deeper than merely a quest for jobs, security or any such thing. These do form part of the crisis in India but there is something beyond that.

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I think the people of Bengal want the CRP there so that the outward disorder, which is not connected with this kind of mental ferment, can be put down and the situation made peaceful.* Then we can all sit together to find a way of release or some fulfilment for the younger people.

Some hon. Members have also spoken of uncertainty. I do not know : perhaps they themselves feel uncertain or their parties feel uncertain. I can assure them that so far as we are concerned, we do not think there is any uncertainty either amongst us or amongst

* Replying to Shri A.P. Chatterjee's question : "Will you remove the CRP from West Bengal?"

the people of India. I have been travelling a great deal and wherever I go, I find the people are certain of what they want. To be restless is something different. The people are certain of what they want. They are certain also of the changes they desire. And it is up to us to try and bring about those changes as quickly as possible through democratic and constitutional means. Had it been humanly possible to have an ideal plan here or anywhere in the world. I am sure, somebody would have produced it. But it has not been produced either in India or in any other country. An ideal is something towards which one works. It is not something that you can immediately grasp. The ideal itself can be a moving thing, in the sense that the needs of our people are not stagnant. As they obtain something, they will want and rightly want, other things, and we are trying towards them...

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We want both*. You may want only one. But we think that the mere fulfilment of the material needs of the people is not enough for any nation. Many nations today which are affluent, have discovered this truth for themselves. So we think that while it is important to give the people their basic needs, which is the most important thing and which is a short-term measure, we have to look beyond that as well.

One other hon. Member, I believe the Member who spoke last, spoke of the great adventure of planning, the great adventure of building up this country. Another honourable Member said that we have rather grandiose schemes. I do not think that anyone looking at this plan or at the schemes we have formulated will call it a grandiose Plan. It is on the whole a small Plan compared with the needs of the Indian people. I want to say— I do not know how many members will agree with me—that I do have grand dreams for this country and I think all the people of India, especially the young people of India, do have grand dreams. No people can survive or grow unless they have such grand dreams and unless they aim higher than they can grasp or reach.

All of us have before us a vision of India, an India which is strong and prosperous, a country which will produce some day 100 million tonnes of steel per year and one billion kilowatts of power when no family will know the pangs of hunger. But this vision has to be translated into reality through hard work and dedication and sacrifice. While drawing up the Plan, we have to combine our idealism with a realistic appraisal of our resources and our capabilities in this short time.

I am sure that hon. Members know that this Plan is already in the process of implementation in every State regardless of whether they have a coalition Government or Congress Government or non-Congress Government. Also while it is being implemented, we are constantly in touch with the planning Commission, and the administration along with all these bodies at the State level. We should pledge our support to the Plan so that if it is not adequate, we can see how by implementing it and fulfilling the targets sooner we can raise still more resources to do the many things which we have not been able to indicate in the Plan. I am sure that this is possible. Some hon. Members have spoken with depression

* Responding to a Member's remark, "Material needs".

and pessimism. I do not share their attitude. I am optimistic and I know that the people of India, with all their difficulties are also optimistic about their future and the Plan forms part of their future.

So, I should like to request the hon. Members who have moved amendment to the main motion, not to press them but if they do press, I request the House to reject the amendments. Of course, there are one or two points in the amendments which we ourselves would like to do for instance, to make certain structural changes which are necessary. We have to find the means by which to bring them about with the consent of the people and through democratic means.

Resources for the Defence Sector*

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, Parliament is the country's watchdog and this debate on Defence Demands provides hon. Members with an opportunity to fulfil this function in a very crucial sector of our lives. All sections of the House are united in their concern for the safety and integrity of our country. Many important and useful points have been made in the course of the debate as well as in the earlier debate on External Affairs, for Defence and Foreign Affairs are closely inter-related as many hon. Members have mentioned. In fact, they are over-lapping.

A special feature of our Defence forces is their closeness to our social milieu. They form an integrated part of our community. We are a nation of agriculturists. It is the farmer's son, who tills the land, who seeks employment in our factories and who joins the defence forces. So, the Jawan is very much in touch with the problems of our people. Secondly, whenever the Armed Forces have been called upon to aid civil authorities, whether during natural calamities such as floods or drought; or in restoring supplies and services essential to the community, they have acquitted themselves with great credit. In remote and border areas, and even in places which have come under our control during war and later returned, we have found medical, health or other essential services sadly lacking, and our Jawans have not hesitated, in spite of their other work and duties, to come to the relief of the local community.

Since the last but one speaker was boasting of his close contacts with the Army, I might also say that I have visited all our border areas and was even able to go to some of the Pakistan areas we had captured. There I was approached by the local population asking me: "Why can't these people remain to look after us?"

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I should like to congratulate our Jawans and Officers on their commendable spirit of service.

Within the constraints of resources, my Government has attempted to provide as much as possible for the Armed Forces, be it for essential modernization, or for their overall well-being and rehabilitation.

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* Replying to the debate on the Demands for Grants, Ministry of Defence, 1981-82, *L.S. Deb.*, 9 April, 1981, cc. 361–72.

Another point which I should like to clarify–is that the Committee on Defence Planning is not a part of the Defence Ministry. It is an inter-Ministerial organization with representatives from Finance, Planning and External Affairs. The Cabinet Secretary is the chairman.

I take this opportunity of reiterating the commitment of Government to maintain the Armed Forces in a state of total preparedness which must naturally take into account not only equipment, but that everything possible is done to keep at the highest level the morale of the Defence personnel. Normally when we make plans for modernisation we have to keep all developments in mind, because there is no point in making a plan which ignores the various events around us.

The discipline and the courage of our officers and Jawans are well recognized. In peace time, when the nation's attention may not be focussed on them, they continue to guard our frontiers, some of them in the most trying of circumstances, inclement climate and far removed from their families or any type of social life or amenity. They bring dedication to their duties. I should like to convey to them, on behalf of the Government and on my own behalf, and I am sure the House will join me in this, our appreciation and greetings.

Of course there are problems. The forces have to be kept always fit and fighting condition. A youthful profile has, therefore, to be maintained and because of this, as many as 70,000 personnel are retired annually at a comparatively young age. Finding alternative occupations for them is a national responsibility. We do treat this question with a sense of urgency. A series of measures have been taken for the welfare and rehabilitation of ex-servicemen. The State Governments and the private sector industries have been urged to keep this constantly in mind. Our ex-servicemen are disciplined and trained, and there is no reason why many of them cannot be gainfully employed in various developmental activities.

Sir, I was astounded to see that one of the cut motions implies a lack of feeling of national integration amongst our Defence forces. I am sure the rest of the House will agree that, on the contrary, it is they who set a good example to us in this matter. Some cut motions asked for a substantial increase in the Defence Budget. While I share the concern of hon. Members, I must remind them that it is not our intention to build a war machine or to compete in the arms race. Our aim is primarily to prevent others from disturbing our peace and our development. Our resources are limited. Defence is an integral and important part, and yet only one part of our national endeavour. It cannot be built at the cost of socio–economic development not would it be effective without a strong economic base or a united, disciplined and contented people. In these circumstances we have made the most judicious allocation of resources for the defence sector. For the year 1980-81, we have provided an increase of Rs. 200 crores over the sanction in the Budget Estimates and for the year 1981-82, we have proposed a marginal increase, raising the total Defence Budget to Rs. 4200 crores. This increase takes into account the rise in the cost of equipment and in the provisions for pay, for allowances and pensionary benefits. While some members want us to cut down our defence expenditure others feel that we are spending too much.

As a percentage of gross national product, our expenditure on Defence is one of the lowest in the world. In 1979, it was : India 3.9; USA 5.2; USSR 11.13; and UK 4.9. For Pakistan it was 5.7 in 1978; we do not have latest figures for Pakistan and they are not available. Similarly, our Defence expenditure as a percentage of Central Government expenditure is also low compared to that of most countries. But we do our best that the needs of the Defence Services should be fully met and not suffer for shortage of funds.

Our programmes to modernise all wings of the Armed Forces are continuing in the perspective of the security environment of the foreseeable future. Schemes have been sanctioned to increase the fire power, the mobility and the means of communication of our army. While our efforts for indigenously developing our main battle tank are continuing, we have, for the intervening period, procured a newer generation of battle tank. The Air Force has acquired greater punch with the introduction of MIG-23 aircraft and the Jaguar. For the Navy, we have embarked upon a programme of refitting older ships and obtaining general purpose frigates and mine– sweepers. Negotiations to procure SSK submarines have reached an advanced stage.

Self-reliance remains our guiding principle in this as in other spheres of activities. The new Defence Research and Development Department in engaged in designing and developing sophisticated equipment. We are encouraging the growth of ancillary industries around Defence production establishments. Our ordnance factories are producing a wide variety of stores ranging from machine–guns to bombs and anti-submarine projectiles, for the three services. Some notable achievements in the production field have been the manufacture of medium machine-guns, fitted largely with indigenously produced components, the development of the 9 mm auto-pistol, air field lighting equipment, etc.

The best defence is the prevention of war and that is what India has been involved in during all these years and that is the major preoccupation of our foreign policy. Since our Foreign Minister has dealt very lucidly and comprehensively with our thinking on these matters, with our relations with other countries, and especially with our neighbours as well as with recent developments in the non–alignment movement and other relevant questions such as the North-South problems, I do not need to go into these again.

There is near if not total unanimity in the world on one point. Never in the last two decades has the international outlook been as grim as it is today. This is not merely my own assessment but that of the scores of world leaders from five continents whom I have met in this past year. I am not given to alarm or exaggeration. Yet I must warn that at this time we simply cannot afford to be complacent or to sit back hoping that matters will somehow be sorted out. It will take the most earnest exertion of all countries, to somehow hang on to peace and to prevent the situation from exploding, or drifting towards disaster. The basic responsibility for peace lies with the big powers. Their attitudes of confrontation will engulf all others. Much that happens in smaller countries is often the result of such outside manoeuvres and manipulations. Yet countries like ours, which are not big powers in the military or any other sense, can and must pull their weight individually and collectively. Peace to us is vital for the consolidation of our independence, for the building of our economy and indeed for our very survival as nations.

There is actual fighting in more than one part of the world. Many other areas are like powder kegs ready to blow up at any inadvertent striking of a match. The focus of the cold war has shifted from Europe to the Indian Ocean littoral. As has been said our South-West and South-East Asia flanks are flash points. New armaments are being piled up in our region, not only around the Indian Ocean but in a number of inland countries.

We are told that the purpose of the militarisation of our area is the containment of the expansionism of one big power by the other, and of ensuring the stability of the Gulf region. In our view this policy is counter–productive. It will virtually prevent a politically negotiated settlement in Afghanistan nor will it bring peace to the Gulf and South-West Asian region. The security of the Gulf should primarily be the responsibility of the Gulf countries themselves who should not allow external interference or pressures in the shaping of their future.

The unresolved crisis in Afghanistan and the continuing conflict in Iraq-Iran have given encouragement to the hawks of many countries. We continue to be deeply concerned that there are as yet no signs of improvement in Afghanistan. We stand firmly for the ending of all outside presences in that country, as well as elsewhere, but it would be wrong to think that there is only one foreign intervention. Our advocacy of a political solution to this problem has assumed even greater relevance than when the trouble began, because of the increasing entanglement of the big powers in this entire region. Any solution must obviously balance the views of all concerned parties.

Developments in Afghanistan have given Pakistan an excuse to demand more arms and to other countries to supply them. We are also disturbed that a mischievous campaign has been started in some quarters to suggest that Pakistan needs to be strengthened because of India's designs. This point is patently ridiculous and untrue.

Every country has a duty to look after its defence. But let us remember that in the last ten years, Pakistan has doubled its defence strength. Yet me did not protest then. But the present moves introduce a qualitative difference. Now, Pakistan's defence seems once again to be becoming part of a larger strategic alignment stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, to say nothing of the Indian Ocean in between. This is what worries us.

We welcomed Pakistan's entry into the non-aligned movement. But do their new intentions fit in with non-alignment or are they going back to their old policies ?

Officially, Pakistan has denied that it is planning to produce nuclear weapons. But these denials have not allayed the fears and suspicions anywhere in the world. In fact, it is in the countries of the West that detailed accounts have been appearing about Pakistan's nuclear preparations. It should be clearly understood that Pakistan's development of nuclear bombs will have grave and irreversible consequences on our subcontinent. We have kept our eyes and ears open. We are fully aware of our responsibilities and the House can be confident that we shall respond in an appropriate way to any development. Our own policy has been to use nuclear energy only for peaceful purposes and we crusade for the total banning of all nuclear weapons.

The Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Aga Shahi has been here twice. In response to his invitation and in pursuance of the Simla Agreement, our Foreign Minister will, I hope soon go to Islamabad. This visit will be in continuation of our patient approach in dealing with Pakistan since the Simla Conference. Some leaders of the opposition parties have been pleased to say outside the House that India with its size need not be afraid of Pakistan. We are not afraid of Pakistan or of anyone else. Size itself is not strength. In fact, without unity and discipline, it can be a liability. But we do care very much for the tranquinty of our region and the stability of our neighbourhood. I had expected greater farsightedness from such experienced leaders.

We have expressed our serious misgivings directly to the United States Government through our Ambassador and through Shri G. Parthasarathi who had gone to the United States on some other work. The response of the United States will be known by its actions. Our efforts at friendship and co-operation continue and will continue. But at the same time, we must not ignore the realities or dangers of the unfolding situation. India has never resorted to any step which might be taken as a threat to our neighbouring countries. Indeed we have repeatedly assured them of our policy of respect for their sovereignty and integrity. We want them to live in peace and stability. In fact, the pace of socio-economic development in our own country is linked with events in our neighbourhood. Jawaharlal Nehru's words uttered 25 years ago that "the cold war has come to our door-step' is true once again. The gains made through patient international diplomacy over the last 30 years have been swept away by the hot winds of belligerency. The situations in Afghanistan and the Gulf, serious as they are, are not half as menacing as the resumption of the cold war. The powerful nations of Europe and America seem to have a special flair for fighting their wars on the soils of the under-developed and developing countries of Asia and Africa. Added to this are the ocean waters of our region.

We are alarmed at the pronouncements of some major spokesmen of the US Administration which have created disquiet even amongst some of their close allies. We hope that as that Government studies the complex international situation in greater depth and with greater understanding, it will appreciate the need to de–escalate tensions. Experience has shown that military solutions are short-lived and give rise to new problems. Hence no opportunity for a dialogue should be missed. Proposals like those of President Brezhnev should be looked at in this context. The big powers have the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace. But recent history has shown that the big powers do not always get their own way. Other countries can do a great deal to generate the right atmosphere and to mobilise the voices for peace.

Some have alleged our dependence on a particular country. This allegation is quite baseless. It shows how people, and even hon. Members of Parliament, are influenced by the propaganda of vested interests. This is even anti–national as it reflects on the morale of our forces and our people. We have built a strong techno–economic base. And, whenever we have had to buy equipment from abroad to keep abreast of the latest technological developments, we have carefully compared the pros and cons of various offers and have decided the source of procurement only in the best interests of our country and after

ascertaining the equipment most suited to our needs. Keeping in view cost effectiveness, we have in our inventory, equipment and materials not from one country alone but from diverse sources which include France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, UK as well as the USA and the USSR and also from some other countries. In the matter of supplies of spares, no country can blackmail us in times of need.

India is not only a large land mass but comprises also a large number of islands which are strategically situated and vulnerable to external threats. Their defence is a matter of direct national concern. Foreign vessels are showing undue interest in these outlaying islands and in our seas. We are taking steps to strengthen the security of those islands.

A point which was mentioned when I visited our islands on both sides—Lakshadweep as well as the Andaman–is that normally when we speak of the length of India we say Kashmir to Kanyakumari. And it was very forcibly brought out that both Minicoy and Pygmalion Point are much more to the South. I request hon. Members that when they refer to the size of India in future, to keep this in mind.

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This brings me on to the larger issue of the oceans around as. Our seas are vital from the point of view of security, from the point of view of natural resources and communication and of our environment. All these years a few big powers considered the Oceans as their preserve. Global attempts have been made in recent years to bring about an acceptable international regime of ocean management. But even these have met with opposition and have recently received a set back. In the meantime we must be vigilant to safeguard our legitimate rights. We have been and are strengthening our Coast Guard Organisation, and new legislation is being proposed to deter poaching in our waters. A new Department of Ocean Development is being set up and this will be followed by the establishment of an Ocean Commission.

External threat need not always take the form of a military invasion or an attack from outside. Other subtle moves destabilise countries and damage their national fabrics. Outside elements seem to be showing a great deal of interest in fomenting fissiparous movements within our country and encouraging those who indulge in violence. Some time ago, I had drawn attention to elements in the North East which advocated secessionist tendencies. Today similar irresponsible and even more sinister claims of separate nationhood are being heard from other parts of our country–astonishingly even those parts whose sons and daughters have contributed such hard work to the development of our Nation and sacrificed so much to the defence of our borders.

I want to deal with another question to which an hon. Member referred. He concluded on what I had said about civilisation. Civilisation is not synonymous with industrial

development or affluence by itself. And when I referred to civilised people, I mean those who are civilised in mind...(*Interruptions*) I think it is an American* who wrote if I remember the words aright :

"Ill fares the land to hastening a prey.

Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

*** *** ***

So our endeavour is to build that kind of man. It is a very long-term goal. But we hope that step by step we shall get nearer to it.

By the way, hon. Member Shri Indrajit Gupta, said something about our Service Chiefs meeting Senator Price. I am told that they did not meet Senator Price either jointly or singly.

As hon. Members are aware, defence is strongly influenced by and dependent on many other factors. This is one of the reasons why I have kept Defence with me, to forge closer co-ordination and to introduce more effective institutional arrangements. Modern security implies defence plus foreign policy plus self-reliant technology. It rests on the soundness of the economy, on political cohesion and social harmony. But in the ultimate analysis it is the people who count their morale, their commitment and patriotic determination. As one hon. Member pointed out, the Vietnamese had neither money, industrial capacity nor military equipment worth the name. The people were poor and short of almost all their needs. Yet, the manner in which they rallied and united, matched their strength against the mightiest and prevailed is the saga of our time. Our own freedom struggle is a shining example of the power of will, endurance and perseverance. The Indian people have this quality in abundant measure. Let us, the political parties and all others, not fail them or our defence forces, by diverting attention or dissipating energies on non-issues.

I urge on the hon. Members to withdraw their cut motions and to adopt the Demands unanimously.

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* Oliver Goldsmith.

Loan from IMF*

Sir, I am not making speech, but I feel that I should emphasize one point. My colleague, the Finance Minister** has already dealt with most of the points which are being raised. I have heard some of the speeches from my room. What he has not dealt with, he will no doubt do so, at the end of the debate.

I want to emphasize just this, that this loan or the agreement for the loan, is a line of credit. It does not force us to borrow, not shall we borrow unless it is in the national interest. There is absolutely no question of our accepting any programme which is incompatible with our policy, declared and accepted by Parliament. It is inconceivable that anybody should think that we would accept assistance from any external agency which dictates terms which are not in consonance with such policies.

I thought I would make that very clear.

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Sir,*** I have not come here to discuss the economics of the loan, which my colleague, the Finance Minister, has explained previously, and will, no doubt, do so most ably at the end of the debate. But some questions have arisen on the political aspect. I intervened for about a minute in the other House, and I thought I would enlarge upon my remarks if I may, in this House, and I take a couple of minutes.

What has been alleged or insinuated is that by taking this loan we have deviated or are intending to deviate from our declared policy. That is why I have come here to strongly refute this allegation. In the other House, I said and I should like to repeat, that it is inconceivable that we would accept assistance from any external agency on terms which are not in conformity with our declared national policy.

Just a glance at our policies : Basically we aim at self-reliance, and I think that wherever I have been recently–I have travelled a great deal–this was acknowledged by economists as well as others that we had made a tremendous effort and gained, not complete success, but certainly partial success in this direction.

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* While participating in the debate on a Motion regarding India's Extended Arrangement with the International Monetary Fund, *L.S. Deb.*, 2 December, 1981, cc. 434–35.

** Shri. R Venkataraman.

*** While speaking in Rajya Sabha on arrangement with the International Monetary Fund, *R.S. Deb.*, 3 December, 1981, cc. 306-08.

We stand for self-reliance. We are committed to the uplift of the weaker sections, and we have, as the hon. Members know, a mixed economy, in which the public sector will hold the commanding heights, but the private sector also has a legitimate and active role. This policy was decided upon right at the beginning by our leaders, not as a whim, but after deep thought given to the special conditions existing in India and also the vast size of our problem.

Also, as we in our independent struggle, had, mobilised all sections of the people, the rich, the middle class and the poor, the highly sophisticated, the partly educated and the illiterate, so, in the development effort also no section must be left out. We must mobilise this entire force in one direction, to make this country strong and self-reliant.

We are also committed to build up indigenous capacity in production and to progress towards self-reliance. We are doing everything possible to build up our own strength. But we found that we needed to import in order to increase efficiency in production, to achieve more rapid growth in investment and to provide essential commodities which were not available at all. This is the import policy which we are maintaining at this moment. We have liberalised procedure because they were cumbersome and they added to our problems, not just problems of those who wanted to sell to us or to invest here, but even our own. But I should like to assure the House that there is not going to be no reversal of our policy of using this to develop our indigenous capacity and our self-reliance.

We have provided and we shall continue to provide, special assistance to the poorer sections, particularly of the backward regions, economically backward regions and classes whether they live in rural or in urban areas. We shall continue to support programmes to meet their essential needs and for their economic development and advancement.

Since ours is a mixed economy, we shall also continue to encourage the private sector; it should impinge on any of the areas reserved for the State sector, but worse in those areas which are kept aside for the private sector. In that area, it should grow and play a much fuller part than it is doing today in the development of the country's economy. The public sector will maintain the commanding heights of our economy, and I am sure that it will continue to expand. We should redouble our efforts, to make it more efficient, to produce higher returns and to serve our social purpose. These in a nut-shell are the basic elements of our economic policy and we are not going to compromise of them. There is no question of our being dictated to from any quarter. Anybody who has been abroad or who has been with me when I have talked with leaders there or exchanged correspondence with them will see that we have been very firm on all those points. This is all I wanted to say.

4

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Installation of High-Powered Transmitter*

With your permission, Sir, I would like to read out a statement.

In October, 1964, it was decided that—

(i) the earlier proposals of having six 100 KW short-wave and one 1000 KW medium-wave transmitters, and five 100 KW short-wave transmitters as provided for in the Third Five Year Plan may be given up; and

(ii) the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting may be authorised to enter into commitments for the purchase of two 250 KW short-wave and one 100 KW short-wave transmitters for installation at Delhi within the Third Five Year Plan.

However in view of the feeling of urgency expressed in Parliament and outside regarding the need for a Super High Power Medium Wave transmitter for broadcasting to countries to the north and south-east of India, the whole matter was recently reconsidered at a meeting to which technical experts were invited. At this meeting, it was unanimously agreed that—

(i) Medium-wave transmission within its comparatively limited range was much more effective than short-wave transmission;

(ii) It has the advantage of being received by even cheap, single-band receivers as well as, of course, all-band sets;

(iii) For the limited purpose of efficient broadcasts to countries like Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan, in the north and Burma, Thailand, Malaysia and part of Indo-China in the south-east, a powerful medium-wave transmitter would be preferable to a short-wave transmitter;

(iv) The medium-wave transmitter would be effective only for a limited period—four hours in the evening—and, if both the North as well as the South-Eastern Group were to be served, the time would have to be divided between the two and arrangements for reversal of the beam would be necessary;

(v) If a similar service was needed for broadcasts to the West, another transmitter to be sited either in Bombay or Bhuj would be necessary and this would cover Pakistan, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia and the North-Eastern portions of Africa;

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* Replying (as the Minister of Information and Broadcasting) to the Half-an-Hour-Discussion regarding High-Powered Transmitter, *L.S. Deb.*, 14 December, 1964, cc. 4875-80.

(vi) With suitable aerials, the two 250 KW short–wave transmitters proposed to be stationed in Delhi, would serve all the areas mentioned above and also countries beyond, such as China towards the East, the Soviet Union and the African countries to the West;

(vii) The short-wave transmission would provide day-and-night service, but reception though very much wider in range, would not be so effective in the countries within the shorter range as Medium Wave transmission;

(viii) Considering our resources, although from the long-term angle, short-wave transmitters would be preferable for the immediate presentation of a proper image of India and her policies to the countries to the north and south-east of India, a powerful medium-wave transmitter would be more advantageous, particularly in view of the fact that most listening is done during the evening hours.

Hon. Members will be glad to hear that it has accordingly been decided that All India Radio should go in for a super high power medium-wave transmitter for location at Calcutta in addition to the short-wave transmitters which have already been approved as mentioned earlier.

Sir, I would like to apologise to the House because this news has appeared in the newspapers.

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I can only say that when I was approached by the newspaper people, I only told them that no decision has been taken and that I would make an announcement on the 14th.

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I would also like to express my gratitude to hon. Members, because it was their interest in this question which helped us to get this decision of having all the transmitters. One of the hon. Members asked whether we have got it cleared. It has been cleared by the Finance Ministry and this is a Cabinet decision.

Shri Kamath asked abour our general policy in this regard. We have tried to step up our propaganda, and I would like to emphasise that the purposes of our broadcasts are not merely to counteract Chinese or Pakistani propaganda but, as I mentioned in my statement, to present a clear and correct picture of India. We want to play a positive role than a mere negative role. Once we get these transmitters, of course, our work will be very much easier.

I was not in Rome and therefore I cannot say how much we heard there.

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The hon. Deputy Minister is pointing out to me that Pakistan Radio is somewhat nearer Rome than we are.* It is true that our services are not as strongly received as they should be.

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* Referring to Shri Basappa who said when he was in Rome, the Indians there had told him that whereas Pakistan Radio was being heard, the Indian Radio was not being heard there.

With these new transmitters we hope things will improve. In fact, in France we are heard, though not always, quite clearly.

It is difficult for me to say by what time these transmitters will be available. Tenders have been invited. We have approached various countries. Finance has agreed to allow us to have these transmitters only on the condition that they are got from the rupee–credit countries. We are approaching them to find out how soon we can have them.

I am sorry about the dissolution of this committee. I must confess that I did not quite realise what its functions were. As soon as they gave their advice on the transmitter, I thought their work was over. We shall certainly reconsider this matter also. We could have a new committee, an expanded committee, or a different committee.

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If it is felt necessary, we could have it.* I have already said that we have started action to acquire the transmitters. I am told it will take about two years to install them.

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We are trying to get them as soon as possible.** We have strengthened our field publicity units in our border areas as well since the Chinese aggression.

With regard to frequencies, I do not think that I can say...

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I am so told by the Ministry. We will, of course, try to do it earlier. The Deputy Minister says it may be one and a half years.***

I think I have covered all the questions.

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* Replying to Shri S.M. Banerjee's comment : "Not with the same Members", and Shri H.V. Kamath's suggestion : There should be new personnel.

** Replying to Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath who said, "Another two years? Time is against us. We have already lost two years."

*** Replying to Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath who wanted to know as to whose report it was that it would take two years to install the transmitters; and to Mr. Dy. Speaker who wanted to know as to why should it take two years?

Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy*

...One of the points made firstly was about electronics. It is a very important subject, but actually it does not come under this department at all, except for the Electronics Corporation at Hyderabad, which was just started last year and which will produce goods worth over Rs. 75 lakhs in one year.

The Government is very much concerned with what is called brain drain which my hon. friend opposite referred to and we are trying to do whatever we can to see that we are able to help our brilliant young scientists. But unfortunately, we cannot afford the type of opportunities that are available in the USA, Canada and so on. We are looking at this and we are in touch with a number of them. As the hon. Member** knows, it is not only us, but even advanced countries like the U.K. who are facing this problem in a very big way.

One hon. Member has urged an alteration of our policy to utilise atomic energy for peaceful purposes. This is a matter on which I have spoken at length in reply to questions and on other occasions also. But because it is very important and reference is made to it time and again, I would like to say a few words on it. I would like to assure the hon. Member opposite that whatever policy the Government follows, has nothing to do with whether the particular scientist believes in non-violence or not. That is his private business. If he is in charge of a programme like this, he has to follow whatever is the policy of the Government. And, that policy is framed after due consideration of the national interest, specifically with regard to national security I can assure the House that Government regards this as of paramount importance and this policy as well as all policies, bearing on security, are kept under constant review. But we do feel that the events of the last twenty years clearly show that the possession of nuclear weapons have not given any military advantage in situations of bitter armed conflict which have sometimes taken place between nations possessing nuclear weapons and those who do not possess them.

We think that nuclear weapons are no substitute for military preparedness, involving conventional weapons. The choice before us involves not only the question of making a few atom bombs, but of engaging in an arms race with sophisticated nuclear war-heads and an effective missile delivery system. Such a course, I do not think would strengthen national security. On the other hand, it may well endanger our internal security by imposing

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* Replying to the debate on the Demands for Grants, Dept. of Atomic Energy, 1968-69, *L.S. Deb.*, 24 April, 1968, cc. 2869-74.

** Shri Samar Guha.

a very heavy economic burden which would be in addition to the present expenditure on defence. Nothing will better serve the interests of those who are hostile to us than for us to lose our sense of perspective and to undertake measures which would undermine the basic progress of the country. We believe that to be militarily strong, it is necessary to be economically and industrially strong. Our programme of atomic energy development for peaceful purposes is related to the read needs of our economy and would be effectively geared to this end. In the pursuit of this programme, our brilliant scientists are getting the opportunity to acquire the latest knowhow and technical skills in the entire field of atomic energy.

I feel that we can be rightly proud that in atomic energy matters as the hon. Member opposite has mentioned, this nation is regarded as one of the advanced nations.

The attainment of self-sufficiency is one of the central themes in our programme. I do not know how much time I have got; otherwise, I have got a list of some of the things which we are doing.

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Uranium mining and the processing of ore at Jaduguda in Bihar, the exploitation of the sands of Kerala to produce atomic minerals, the Fuel Complex that is coming up at Hyderabad, the heavy water plant at Nangal and the new larger unit which will come up at Rana Pratap Sagar, the Electronics Factory at Hyderabad, the Fuel Reprocessing Plant at Tarapur, the Atomic Power Stations at Tarapur in Rajasthan, the establishment of the Power Projects Engineering Division of the Atomic Energy Commission to undertake design and construction of atomic power projects, the construction which has begun at Kalpakkam of a power station which is based on our own efforts, the proto-type fast breeder reactor, which will come by its side, are all helping us to lay a solid foundation for the application of atomic energy for national development.

The break-through which was occurred in the cost of generating electric power by using atomic energy on a large scale is reflected in the current forecast that more than 50 per cent of the new generating capacity, which will be added in the world during the 70s, will be based on atomic energy. Moreover, large agro-industrial complexes established around low cost energy centres can permit developing areas to utilise these advantages even though the capacity of their grids is small. Atomic energy power stations would play a very valuable role in the future not only in areas where other sources of energy are expensive but as base load stations working alongside large hydro-electric installations. The significance of all this to our economy which is so heavily dependent on agriculture is tremendous.

The Deputy Minister has just now given some indication of how the use of this energy can transform agriculture through radiation of seeds and so on and so forth. I shall not go into that. But we must realise the benefits of using atomic energy, its technology and equipment which are largely our own. It is only through efforts such as those that India can advance from a state of poverty to one of self-sustained growth and, as some hon. Members have mentioned, we could skip over various stages of development and profit from the experience of others.

Hon. Members would be glad to know the production of a wide range of isotopes and their use for various purposes in medicine, industry and in research is being actively promoted in this country and is also earning us foreign exchange. The benefits of atomic energy can now come to the common man to give him a better life.

No less basic are the efforts which we are making to attain self-sufficiency in the area of space research in relation to sounding rockets and a modest satellite launching capability, even though we entered this field ten years later. The Rohini rockets, which have so pleased our hon. friend, Professor Sharma, are only the fore-runners of a whole series of more advanced rockets. The Department of Atomic Energy will also bear the responsibility for the construction of the new commercial Satellite Communication Station for the Overseas Communications Service. And what is more significant is that a fully steerable large dish antenna of high precision will be fabricated in India. We shall also build a Variable Energy Cyclotron at Calcutta to provide a valuable tool for research.

During the next year we can confidently look forward to good progress in regard to the ambitious projects which have been undertaken by Indian scientists and engineers.

I should like to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the excellent work which brilliant young people in our establishments are doing.

Even though the cut motions have not been moved, I would just like to refer very briefly to one or two of them because some of them give a wrong impression as the word 'failure' is used so often that anybody seeing them will get the impression that no good work is being done.

The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre in Trombay has three experimental reactors; two of them are entirely designed and built by Indian scientists and engineers and the fact that these two reactors are working satisfactorily surely shows that experimental knowledge has been acquired about fission of critical mass of nuclear material.

There was mention why we were exporting thorium. The exports of thorium mineral are banned but thorium nitrate, which is used in the manufacture of gas mantles, has been and is being exported from this country. India has very large deposits of this material and they are far in excess of what we are likely to require for a very long time; in fact, I am told that known Deposits will suffice for the next few hundred years. So, it would be a pity if we were not to use this natural resource for obtaining foreign exchange which we so vitally require for use in other areas.

There was one point made as to why universities were not used. The Department is supporting research projects in universities and scientific institutions and is, in addition, giving fellowships to deserving candidates.

Another Member referred to the point that we had failed to provide technical means to detect nuclear explosions undertaken by China. I think, this matter was taken up in the House. We have detected all Chinese nuclear explosions; our own scientists have detected them.

All these projects to which I have referred will provide real returns for the investment which we have made in this field in the last 20 years. I am glad that our programme commands such widespread support. It is quite true that we have not been able to give to it the funds which it really requires, but it is a deficiency from which we suffer all along the line. I do agree with those hon. Members who feel that this is very important to our development and that we should give whatever support we can to it. Government is determined and committed to pursue the atomic energy and space research projects with all possible speed. We fully realise their greater importance to the development and progress of our country towards a self-reliant future.

Apollo–13*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, with your persmission I should like to refer to the safe return of the Astronauts last week, and express the pleasure and admiration of this House and of the people of India for the magnificent achievement of the scientists and technicians of the U.S. Space Agency.

Many Members of this House may have sat up on Friday night, as I did, awaiting news of the splashdown and must have shared the tremendous relief, when the news did come through that Lovell, Haise and Swigert were back on earth, sound in body and unvanquished in spirit.

In olden days, we spoke of perilous seas. Yet, the perils of outer space are far more awesome than any that had been known. When the spaceship Apollo-13 developed trouble last week, the anxiety was world-wide and one of the more welcome aspects of this harrowing experience was the fact that it linked the peoples of the world into one family. When he was in Bombay, Ambassador Keating was asked about the welfare of 'our Astronauts'. The three brave men belonged to the United States, but we looked upon them as representatives of the human race, and of the spirit of man.

The Apollo–13 mission might have failed in its avowed objective of making a third landing on the moon. But it is one of those instances when failure can be deemed greater than victory. The rescue operations proved once again the extraordinary power and precision of the instruments of modern technology and even more remarkable than the instruments are the minds which devise and control them. Our congratulations go out to the Scientists and Technologists of the Ground Control Systems, whose work has enabled the astronauts to return safely.

I am glad that the prayers and good wishes expressed by you, Sir, and other Members of the House were of avail. I offer congratulations and greetings to the astronauts Lovell, Haise and Swigert and to their families; also to the Space Scientists and to the people of the United States.

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* Statement about the safe return of the Astronauts, *L.S. Deb.*, 20 April, 1970, cc. 1-2.

Nuclear Technology for India*

The hon. Member** has shown fairly great interest in the subject and very persistently so for a quite some time. As he has mentioned, he has raised this subject in other forms also. However, it is after some time that he is coming back to the engineering side of it. Normally his demand has been for the manufacture of an atom bomb.

If I may skip the long introduction, the main question he has asked is why we are preventing the Atomic Energy Commission from going in for nuclear blasting and for using nuclear energy for engineering; why are we opposed to it? Now, Sir, we are not at all opposed to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes when a meaningful application on mere economic significance is identified. This was an important part in our opposition to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The hon. Member has mentioned about some of the experiments which have taken place in USA. We know that such blasts and experiments have also taken place in the Soviet Union and perhaps few in France also. Although this wording seems to irritate the hon. Members, I must say again that our scientists have tried their best to keep themselves informed of these developments and they are in the picture so far as this matter is concerned. At the present moment the peaceful use of nuclear explosives and detonators is very much in the developmental stage and a practical technology of economic value based on such uses has not yet emerged. In other words the nuclear detonator as a substitute for TNT is not yet on the market as a commercial proposition, as there are many complicated problems connected with this development which are yet to be solved.

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If the hon. Member is reading the magazines and papers which come from other countries he would have noticed that the one thing which is greatly occupying the minds of people in the West is concerned with the changes in the environment which any scientific experiment can bring about : for instance, the effects on the environment as a result of residual radioactivity. In an underground explosion there is always the danger of the contamination of ground-water. For many years many things were being done in all these countries which we all looked up to as advanced technology, of advanced country, but today these very things are being looked at with new eyes. We see how, although they

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* Replying to the Half-an-Hour Discussion on the use of nuclear engineering technology for peaceful purposes, *L.S. Deb.*, 20 April, 1970, cc. 380-83, 389-92.

** Shri Samar Guha.

have led to progress in some directions, at the same time such actions have done great harm in other directions, as well as this matter is occupying great deal of energy, money and the attention of the public. Obviously they now consider these ill-effects to be quite serious for the population.

As I said, apart from the uncertainty regarding the amount of radioactivity, such explosions would also cause serious ecological changes which will be far more significant in the long run.

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There is such a thing as a clean blast, but, as I said earlier, in all these countries this is still in the experimental stage*. We are in touch with developments, in the sense that our scientists have attended the meeting, they have gone to the sites before the explosion took place, they have been explained the whole thing, they have seen the place after the blast—that is what we mean by saying that we are fully in touch. Yet, for a country like India, whether such experiments at this stage are economically feasible and whether they can give results which are commensurate with the expense, is a matter for consideration. As I said, should we feel that this is necessary for any particular project, we would not hesitate to do it, but we must see the problem from all aspects. As Professor Samar Guha has himself pointed out, we are going ahead in many directions. He mentioned food preservation, medicines, agriculture, etc. There is also the use of isotopes for studying the silt in the harbour and many other such things.

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I can assure the hon. Member that we are not stopping scientists**. They are in no way being stopped from making experiments. They are today engaged in gathering greater knowledge in all directions so that when it is necessary to take up any project we will be fully ready with the knowledge and experience. They are the people who will decide, in consultation with us, what is the right place, what is the right project for using such technology and in what ways it will be more useful ? Whether India can start now when even in other countries which are so much more advanced in this technology, the matter is still at an experimental stage, whether it helps us at this moment to do some experimentation, is a matter which has to be considered.

I think the hon. Member Dr. Guha raised another point with which he was very much concerned. That was with regard to our withholding information. We have never withheld any information from the House which can be given to the House. For instance, in reply to an earlier question, we have given information regarding the amount of heavy water. I think it was Dr. Guha's question.

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* Replying to Shri Samar Guha's observations : "The clean devices of atomic explosions are there and there is no radio-activity falling out; they have developed this system in U.S.A. and Russia."

** Replying to Shri Samar Guha who said, "I am proud of our atomic scientists; but unfortunately you are not allowing them to go ahead."

I think we said that the Nangal Plant produces about 14 tonnes of heavy water per year. But regarding some other information, we did feel that it was not useful to give to the House.

As the hon. Member knows, there are many items of information which are guessed at by other countries. And there are some items of information which are known to some people. But, there is no reason why this information should be made available to all countries publicly.

Some matters may come up when we are discussing defence or other such matters. I am sure the House will appreciate that it is one thing for people to guess at information, and it is another thing for authoritative information being given by Government. People can always guess a certain figures. I do not think the hon. Member has asked anything else.

I have just mentioned some of the problems connected with the development of this technology—one about the effect on the environment, the contamination and so on, and the other about the actual usefulness of exploiting ores of indigenous origin by creating cavities from such blasts and reaching the ores. Reaching in Situ type of ore is economically feasible, but this may not be necessarily suitable for all types of ores and specially the types which we have in India.

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I must say that I entirely agree with the hon. Member* that the provision for atomic energy is not sufficient. But the hon. Member knows just as well as I do the financial limitations under which we have to function.

It is a question of seeing what item or what programme is curtailed. In this process all State plans are pruned; and the Central plans are pruned; the Minister of Education was just saying how much his programmes have been cut. So, this is something about which none of us can be happy. But we can only enlarge these programmes if we can enlarge our overall resources.

I am sorry that some strong words were used with regard to the Chairman of our Atomic Energy Commission. Dr. Vikram Sarabhai is a dedicated and knowledgeable scientist and it is very unfair to say that he is blocking the atomic energy programme in anyway. On the contrary, I think that he is doing his utmost to go ahead with it as fast as possible. Dr. Bhabha was a very great scientist, and it is true that he has left a void in our scientific life. But if we do not have one person to fill that void, I think the younger scientists as a community are trying their best to fill it.

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The other question asked was, whether we should have an expert committee. The Atomic Energy Commission is such an expert body; it is in touch with expert bodies, the

* Shri B.K. Daschowdhury.

highest expert bodies, all over the world. Therefore, it would not be possible to have another expert committee which could do more than this Commission is doing. (*Interruptions*) Shri Shiva Chandra Jha's question is covered by what I have said about the budget.

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The NPT bans not only nuclear weapons but also other nuclear devices, and therefore, one has to keep this in view. But, as I said earlier, the most important thing for us is to gather knowledge about all these matters. That is the only way in which we can go ahead. And as you see, today we are getting knowledge from other countries, and also help from other countries; so much so, that the Indian component of reactor construction materials which were only 35 per cent for the Rana Pratap Sagar reactor I, are now 78 per cent for the Madras reactor. We are going ahead.

Much has been said about peaceful nuclear explosion in other countries. I find from a paper, which I have, that there are a great many unknown factors. A great deal of information on the properties of nuclear explosions and in fact their effects relative to conventional explosives must still be developed. This was confirmed by the conclusions reached by the Board of Governors of the IAEA after it discussed the findings of the committee established last year on the applications of nuclear explosion for peaceful purposes and the role of the Agency in this matter.

The Board concluded that—

> "In the light of the experimental status of the technology, the Agency should approach this subject on an evolutionary basis, devoting its attention initially to the exchange and dissemination of information."

That is why, since this is still at the experimental stage, I think it would not be wise for us to go into it immediately, but as I said, we should endeavour in every possible way to gain knowledge and learn from the experiments which other nations are undertaking, so that we are ourselves placed in a better position.

Council of Scientific and Industrial Research*

I had no intention of speaking but since Shri Vajpayee and some others have made various allegations against me I should like to say a few words.

Firstly, we all know that the progress of our country and the well-being of our people are largely dependent on the progress of Indian science and also on the well-being and the feeling of involvement of Indian scientists in the great tasks which face our country. Therefore India's future cannot be divorced from the future of Indian science.

We are discussing today a very serious matter. We should discuss it without any prejudice or bias. Unfortunately, I do see traces of prejudice in this discusison. Various, rather intemperate and unfortunate, allegations have been made. As Prof. Mukerjee said a while ago, some of us have become thickskinned because we have got used to these baseless allegations thrust on us day after day, but this does not, therefore, give any more credence to those allegations.

I would, first of all, like to deal with myself and would like to deny categorically that I put any pressure on the Chairman or any member of the Committee, that I sent any message to them or that I met any of them. Of course, I may have met one or two Members of Parliament during this period but not concerning this business. If they met me, they did not mention anything about the meetings of this Committee. So far as I am concerned, certainly there was no direct or indirect message for me, nor did I even know what the Committee was doing until I received the final report.

Allegations have also been made about the integrity and impartiality of the Chairman and indirectly against the Committee as a whole. Prof. Mukerjee spoke just now about his personal knowledge of Justice Sarkar.

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You are perfectly entitled to have your views** and the hon. Member, Shri Hiren Mukerjee, is entitled to his views. I am at this moment referring to something which he said. I was going to say that I myself did not know Justice Sarkar except that I may have met him on one or two formal occasions. But certainly his reputation in his sphere of

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* Participating in the debate on the Motion regarding Report of the Committee of Inquiry (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research), *L.S. Deb.*, 19 May, 1970, cc. 297–302.

** Replying to Shri Madhu Limaye's remarks, "That is irrelevant. Let us go by the action, the report of the Committee."

activity has been an exceedingly high one. Also, his work, whether it was in the Supreme Court or wherever he has functioned, has one which has upheld the dignity of the whole Indian judiciary. Therefore I am very sorry that such insinuations were made. I think that it was right of the members of the Committee to say something about it.

The hon. Member took objection to this. I think, the members of the Committee did not object to criticism of the work of the Committee. It is the right of Parliament to have such a discussion, and to criticise but not to doubt the integrity or the *bona fides* of a person. Therefore, I think, the members of the Committee were perfectly within their rights when they expressed their own great respect for Justice Sarkar and complete faith in his impartiality and detachment. I should like to re-affirm the Government's respect for him and also their regard for his impartiality and the manner in which he has dealt with an extremely difficult task in the public interest and has approached it without bias.

This is evident in the Report which does not hesitate to mention every relevant fact, whether favourable or unfavourable. I am sorry that instead of appreciating the Committe's objectivity, some hon. Members seem to have espoused factionalism, which unfortunately, has prevailed in the C.S.I.R. I have no hesitation in admitting that all is not well with the C.S.I.R. All has not been well with the C.S.I.R. That is why this Committee had to be appointed. We are fully aware that much needs to be done. Although this factionalism is regrettable, as I have said on a previous occasion, this is not an exclusively Indian monopoly. It is everywhere amongst scientists. (*Interruption*)

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I am just saying, let us see things in their perspective. Scientists are also human beings. This is what I am trying to say. We should not think that only other people can quarrel and disagree and that scientists belong to another species and are above that sort of thing. Although we greatly respect their work, which is very essential for modern life, they are also human beings and they also suffer from emotions, rivalries and so on which other human beings have.

Hon. Members will recall a bitter, an almost vicious, personal, controversy between Oppenheimer and Teller in U.S.A. and also the British scientific row between Lindeman (later Lord Cherwell) and Sir Henry Tizard, the Chairman of the Aeronautical Research Committee.

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I am not at all encouraging that. Although appointments and so on have come in, that is not the whole of the story. There are differences in outlook and differences in the methods of working and so on.*

The Members of the Sarkar Committee included eminent Members of Parliament and also some of our most distinguished scientists. Hon. Members are aware that the M.P's.

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* Replying to Shri Samar Guha who said : "That was on a big policy matter, not on appointments, it was on whether Hydrogen Bomb should be made or not and Dr. Oppenheimer opposed Hydrogen Bomb."

who were in this Committee were not drawn from a single political party, but they represented a wide range of opinion in both Houses of Parliament. The scientific members were also chosen from different disciplines and institutions and they are all renowned figures in the international scientific community. Two of them are Fellows of Royal Society. The Government have taken particular care to exclude anyone connected, in any way, with the C.S.I.R or with its governing body.

The Committee of Enquiry have sifted a vast mass of documentary evidence and representations both from C.S.I.R. employees and others and they had personal discussions with many people. As hon. Members know—I think, this is where Prof. Samar Guha got confused—the Committee have recommended that an officer independent of the C.S.I.R. should be appointed to look into the allegations and to make a thorough investigation into such of the complaints as disclosed a *prima facie* case as a result of preliminary examination. The Government accept this recommendation and propose to implement it speedily. This is what we have accepted and not a separate committee enquiry as Prof. Samar Guha thought. When we formed this Committee, it was not the intention either of the Government or of Parliament that Justice Sarkar or the Committee should waste their time in the negative pursuit of witch-hunting. Some witch-hunting we had witnessed earlier on in various debates in both Houses.

The Committee's terms of references were framed in a constructive spirit and so far as I remember, nobody ever protested that these terms were inadequate or contrary to the general sense of the House.

The re-organization of Indian science is a very serious matter. We have to make every effort to enthuse our scientists by creating an atmosphere which is congenial to scientific pursuits. We must not do or say anything which may demoralise them. We can certainly discuss their work but not their individual histories. Our purpose in appointing the Sarkar Committee was to improve the CSIR, not to destroy it, to find a way in which talent, creativity and initiative could be allowed to flourish, not to strangle them, to give our scientists, young and old, a genuine sense of participation in India's progress, not to alienate or fragment them further. These larger considerations formed the basis of the Committee's terms of rerefence and will, I presume, form the focus of their recommendations in Part II of their report which is still awaited.

There was a dissenting note but it was confined to 8 of the 270 cases which were examined by the Committee. In all other cases the Committee's recommendations were unanimous. Where the Commitee have recorded an adverse verdict, the Government propose to institute the necessary inquiry. I can assure the House that the Government are acutely conscious of the problems and frustrations of our scientists. Some of these are world wide problems like the brain drain which affects even advanced countries such as England and Germany. Some of them are peculiar to India and stem from the hierarchical consciousness which is so deeply ingrained in our society. There are others which derive from the imposition of patterns of general administration on the entirely different requirements of scientific administration.

The hon. Member* who spoke just before me spoke about certain rules. Now, I do not say that we should break rules but I do think that we should have different rules for scientists.

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That is why the whole matter has been gone into. I am not defending CSIR. **As I said, I am myself deeply conscious of all that was wrong and still is wrong. The Committee is going into this and at our level, we are ourselves trying to look into the matter and see how we can help the scientific community to work together. I mention this because the question of age and so on were raised. Well, generally, I am not in favour of giving extensions and so on. But there are cases where a person with some special knowledge or experience may be more helpful. Another thing is that many of these young men who are disappointed here and do not fit in with our rules or whatever terms we have put in, go abroad and get very fine jobs, not merely junior jobs, some of them are put in charge of the whole department. So there must be something wrong here where we are unable to fit these young people, and the same people do well elsewhere. They are not rejects. They do not take some low down jobs. They get excellent posts and responsible jobs abroad. I know a number of cases like this to which my attention has been drawn.

All this shows that human beings are such, that no matter how much you try to have an egalitarian society, some kind of a hierarchy does grow up. Today, scientific work comes in one of the top strata, if not the top class, in the most countries but, unfortunately not in our own. This may be one of the reasons why our young brilliant scientists feel discouraged. We must certainly see how we can help to change this situation and make it more congenial for them.

I have nothing against our older scientists who have done brilliant work, excellent work. But, the world of science is constantly changing and advancing. Therefore we have to see that the younger people are not shut off and that they get ample opportunities for expressing themselves and working freely.

Whatever constructive suggestions hon. Members may make are always welcome. But we should resist the temptation of reckless criticism and sweeping condemnation of an institution such as the C.S.I.R. Because, while it has had many defects, it has also got notable achievements to its credit and in varying degree, each one of its laboratories has made a distinctive contribution to our progress in the last two decades.

Our endeavour should be to function in such a way that we invigorate and strengthen all that is good in it for the common benefit of our people.

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* Shri G. Viswanathan.

** Replying to some Members' remark : "Change the rules".

Underground Nuclear Explosion Experiment*

Hon. Members are aware that at 08-05 hours on 18 May, 1974, our Atomic Energy Commission successfully carried out an underground nuclear explosion experiment at a depth of more than 100 metres in the Rajasthan desert. This experiment was part of the research and development work which the Atomic Energy Commission has been carrying on in pursuance of our national objective of harnessing atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

Hon. Members may recall that on 15 November, 1972, I had stated in the Lok Sabha that "The Atomic Energy Commission is studying conditions under which peaceful nuclear explosions carried out underground could be of economic benefit to India without causing environmental hazards". Exactly one year later, on 15 November, 1973, I informed hon. Members of the Rajya Sabha of the continuing interest of the Atomic Energy Commission in this field and also stated that after satisfactory answers to the problems of the possible effects on environmental and ecological conditions are available, the question of actual underground tests for peaceful purposes could be considered.

I am glad to inform hon. Members that this successful experiment on 18 May has not resulted in any way in radio-active contamination of the atmosphere. The radio-activity was so well contained that a party of scientists was able to fly 30 metres above the site and reach upto 250 metres on the ground within an hour of the experiment without encountering any radioactive contamination. The Atomic Energy Commission is at present engaged in studying the result of the experiment. It is expected that this process will take about six months. In keeping with scientific tradition, the Atomic Energy Commission propose to publish papers giving the results of the experiment for the benefit of the scientific world.

All the material, equipment and the personnel in this project were totally Indian. India has not violated any international law or obligation or any commitment in this regard with any country.

This experiment has evoked mixed response from various countries. While developing nations have, by and large, welcomed the experiment as a step in the research and development work carried on by India in the field of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, advanced nations, with some exceptions, have not shown equal understanding. The United States of America, while expressing satisfaction that the International Atomic Energy

* Statement regarding the Underground Nuclear Explosion Experiment, *L.S. Deb*, 22 July, 1974, cc. 264-269.

Agency's safeguards system has worked in regard to agreements with India and that the material used has not come from the United States, have reiterated that the policy of that Government is against nuclear proliferation. The USSR have noted that India has carried out a research programme striving to keep level with the world technology in the peaceful uses of nuclear explosion. The Chairman of the Indian Atomic Energy Commission has received a congratulatory message from the French Atomic Energy Commission on the success of the experiment. China officially reported the event without commenting on the explosion. The reaction of the Government of Japan has been to express regret for the experiment.

Reactions from Canada and our neighbour, Pakistan, have been sharp. While Canada is satisfied that India has not violated any agreement between the two countries, the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs has stated that the experiment represented a severe set-back to efforts being made in the international community to prevent all nuclear testing and to inhibit the proliferation of nuclear explosion technology.

The Government of India is unable to subscribe to the view expressed by the representatives of the Canadian Government in this regard. I have repeatedly reaffirmed our policy of using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and have specifically stated that we have no intention of developing nuclear weapons. The Government of India sincerely hopes that the Government of Canada will appreciate and understand the background of this experiment. I have already mentioned in the earlier part of this statement the fact that our Atomic Energy Commission has been reviewing the progress in this technology from the theoretical and experimental angles. This intention was not kept secret and was made known to the world. If differences of interpretation have arisen between the Government of Canada and the Government of India, it is the Government of India's hope that they will be satisfactorily resolved in the discussions which are under way between the representatives of the two countries.

The Government of India is unable to comprehend the repeated talk of nuclear blackmail indulged in by the representatives of the Government of Pakistan. I have explained in my letter to Prime Minister Bhutto the peaceful nature and the economic purposes of this experiment and have also stated that India is willing to share her nuclear technology with Pakistan in the same way as she is willing to share it with other countries provided proper conditions for understanding and trust are created. I once again repeat this assurance and hope that the Government of Pakistan will accept India's position in this regard.

The Government of Pakistan has also made allegations about radio-activity having been carried to that country. I should like to take this opportunity of stating that this was impossible as there was no venting of radioactivity to the atmosphere and no formation of a radioactive cloud. Moreover, the wind was blowing in the opposite direction as it normally does at this time of the year and even in theory, any hypothetical radioactivity could never have gone to Pakistan. The wind pattern on 18 May, 1974 was *from*, repeat *from*, the south-west.

There are several published reports by scientists from advanced countries on the potential utilisation of peacefull nuclear experiments. In 1970, 1971 and 1972, the

International Atomic Energy Agency organised Panel Meetings on the peaceful uses of nuclear explosions and India attended all these meetings as a Panel Member. In the Foreword to the Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Phenomenology and Status Report, 1970, an indication has been given of the projects for which peaceful nuclear explosions could be used. The following quotation will be adequate in this regard:-

> "Fully contained nuclear explosion (those not breaking through to the ground surface) could be used for many projects. On an industrial level pilot-scale experiments have already been made on gas and oil stimulation, with encouraging results. In addition, the use of cavities created by such explosions appeared to have an economically attractive future for projects such as underground gas and oil storage, and the storage of radioactive wastes from nuclear power stations and chemical plant, for *in situ* retorting of oil from shale like deposits, and for *in situ* leaching of low-grade ores broken up by the explosion. The latter application is of particular interests to one Member State, India, who could by this means use her very large low–grade non-ferrous metal ore deposits, thus making her more independent of imports of these metals and furthering the national economy".

In view of the fact that we have just now carried out the experiment and the results will be available to us after six months, it is considered premature to talk of any particular technological application at a selected site. For any project of this nature to be considered economical and feasible, more experimental, data must be available.

Hon. Members will notice that in the Panel discussions to which I have referred and in which most of the advanced countries have participated, it was emphasised that activities in the field of peaceful nuclear explosion are essentially research and development programmes. Against this background, the Government of India fails to understand why India is being criticised on the ground that the technology necessary for the peaceful nuclear explosing is no different from that necessary for a weapons programme.

No technology is evil in itself; it is the use that nations make of technology which determines its character. India does not accept the principle of apartheid in any matter and technology is no exception.*

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* A similar Statement was made by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi in Rajya Sabha also (*R.S. Deb.*, 22 July, 1974, cc 185–89).

Launching of First Indian Satellite*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the House has taken note of the successful launching of the first Indian Satellite at 1300 hours (IST) on April 19, 1975. The satellite was wholly designed and fabricated in India and was launched from the Soviet Union with the help of a Soviet Rocket Carrier.

This outstanding achievement, the first by a developing country, marks yet another milestone in our efforts to harness the benefits of modern science and technology for national development. Apart from their purely scientific objectives, research and technology involving the peaceful uses of outer space can contribute significantly to the solution of economic and social problems.

The satellite and the entire ground system needed for launching and maintenance were built within a short period of less than three years. I should like to place on record my own and the Government's deep appreciation of the dedicated and conscientious work of our scientists and engineers in the Indian Space Research Organisation under the leadership of Prof. Satish Dhawan and all the others who collaborated. I should also like to take this opportunity to convey our thanks to the Soviet Union for their help during the project and for making available the launch facilities.

* Statement regarding successful launching of the First Indian Satellite, *L.S. Deb.*, 21 April, 1975, cc. 324-25.

Launching of SLV-3*

Sir, I want to share some good news with you and the hon. Members.

I have pleasure in informing the House that the first successful launch of the Indian Satellite Launch Vehicle SLV-3 took place this morning at 8.03.45 hours from Sriharikota Range. The Launch Vehicle placed a 35 kg. Indian Satellite Rohini RS-I in orbit around the earth. The Satellite will orbit the earth approximately once every 90 minutes. SHAR will see two orbits for the first time tonight. Thereafter every twelve hours two more such orbits will be seen over SHAR in regular periodicity.

The four-stage all solid-propellant vehicle has been developed in India by Indian Scientists and Engineers. The total development cost of the SLV-3 Vehicle is about Rs. 20 crore and the present experimental launch has cost about Rs. 1 crore. The Rohini satellite in orbit is intended mainly to measure the performance parameters of the Vehicle and is being tracked by our National Tracking network. Initial indications are that the Vehicle and Satellite function satisfactorily.

The collection of tracking data and the analysis are continuing.

This is a notable achievement for India and for Indian Science. I am sure the House will join me in congratulating our scientists and technicians of the Department of Space. The nation is proud of them and wishes them further successes. (*Interruptions*)

†Shri Vajpayee had made a mention of science, so I thought it appropriate to speak about it at this very moment.

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* Statement regarding launching of SLV-3, *L.S. Deb.*, 18 July, 1980, cc. 276-77.

† Translated from Hindi.

Successful Launching of APPLE*

This Calling Attention has gone far beyond its original intentions. Firstly, of course, the hon. Member has asked what is the utilisation of it ? This has been told before. But the most important is emergency communication in disaster affected areas so as to be able to help in rapid relief work. It has already been said that it will give advance warning of calamities such as cyclone etc. which will be of enormous value of saving human lives as well as property.

It can give educational T.V. programmes between universities and technological institutions. The Members who spoke earlier said that it gives us a closer link with remoter areas i.e. improved tele-communication between different stations using this technique and specially in places which we have not been able to reach earlier.

There are various things, live telecast programmes of national importance and live broadcast on national programmes. T.V. telecast with multiple audio for multi-language video programme transmission and so on. With PSLV now under development, we shall be able to place the other satellite in the sun synchronous orbit by 1986. INSAT–I will be launched by U.S.A. Rocket in 1982.

Of course, we are proud of our scientists. With all due respect to the hon. Members, we should not take away any of the light from them for the leadership. This is their achievement. The scientists, the engineers—there are some names which are well known and which were introduced in the inauguration programme—but there are many others unknown who have been working behind the scenes. It is their achievement. To-day we should direct all our appreciation and congratulations to them rather than to the political leadership.

I am proud to belong to a party which from the beginning has given importance to science and has realised the great role that science can play in development and in helping to eradicate poverty, making drudgery a little less for our people and gradually bringing them the things that they need. But for that we must have knowledge. Science is what give us knowledge and with science we have technology which gives us the capability to translate this knowledge into activities and programmes which will be of direct benefit to the people. At this stage, I need not go into greater detail. Actually, hon. Member is himself very knowledgeable in all these subjects.

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* While speaking in response to a Calling Attention relating to the successful launching of the APPLE, *L.S. Deb.*, 17 August, 1981, cc. 348-53.

We have science clubs in many of our educational institutions and without our prompting, I am sure, they will be told about this achievement. But, as I said in reply to an earlier question, the Education Ministry should look into this and help to encourage such activity.

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†We do not get any such information through APPLE**. The countries like the U.S.A. do have such satellites, through which they can have information about us or any other country. We are making use of the scientific knowledge in the service of the poor and for the good of the country; keeping this in view, progress in science is being made.

In future when we will have multi-spectral cameras, then we shall be able to get more information in the field of agriculture, forestry, water resources, hydrology, geology etc. This is not to be used for spying against any one. In so far as scientists are concerned they are appreciated.

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Mr. Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I should like to move :***

"Having heard the statement on the launching of the APPLE and the inauguration of the Utilisation Experimental Programme, this House places on record its deep appreciation of the dedicated work and patriotic zeal of our scientists, engineers, technicians and workers on this great achievement in the sphere of space technology."****

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Sir, I would like to express my appreciation of hon. Members for joining us in this Resolution*****. I am not referring to some of the criticisms, some valid and some not valid, which have been made. But apart from the advantages which have been mentioned, the most useful information will be that it will be for the good of our farmers specially, that is, advance information about weather conditions, cyclones and so on. This, of course, is not with this development, but with later developments. I should also like to say to my friends on this side that this is an occasion when our appreciation and gratitude should be reserved for our scientists who have done this work in the field rather than bring in the political leadership.

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† Translated from Hindi.

** Responding to Shri Krishnan Chander Pandey's query, "..... I want to know from the Prime Minister whether through this (APPLE) we can have information about our enemies..."

*** While moving the resolution regarding Appreciation of Indian Scientists for successful launching of the APPLE, *L.S. Deb.*, 17 August, 1981, c. 355.

**** (i) An identical Resolution was moved by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi in Rajya Sabha also (*R.S. Deb.*, 20 August, 1981, c. 163).

(ii) In both the Houses, the Resolution was adopted unanimously.

***** Responding to the speeches made by members in Rajya Sabha associating themselves with Resolution, *R.S. Deb.*, 20 August, 1981, c. 172.

Indian Expedition to Antarctica*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I have immense pleasure in informing the House of the successful landing of our first Indian scientific expedition to Antarctica at 00.30 hrs. on the 9th January, 1982. Twenty-one scientists and technicians, drawn from different disciplines, participated.

The main objectives were to study the meteorological and other conditions of Antarctica, which are believed to control the monsoons. The team also carried-out observations in glaciology, geo-magnetism, geology, and physical, chemical and biological oceanography. Their observations included measurements of temperature pressure wind speed, humidity, surface ozone, cloud visibility, radiation, radio wave propagation etc., on the way out of Antarctica, on the continent itself and on the return journey.

Glaciology, geology and physical, chemical and biological conditions were observed on the Antarctican land mass. Some rock samples, which appeared to be similar to rocks found in the Deccan, were also collected. However, detailed analysis will be needed to establish whether the Deccan and Antarctica were joined together at any time.

The expedition team set up on unmanned weather station to collect meteorological data in Antarctica. Power is supplied to the station by solar panels fabricated in India. The continuous record on the cassette can be retrieved at the end of the year and replaced for further recording. The site of the station has been named 'Dakshin Gangotri' and a brass plaque commemorating the expedition has been put up.

The team successfully tested the quality and performance of Indian equipment and materials like watches, walkie-talkie sets, cement, dehydrated food, batteries and nylon ropes in sub-zero temperature conditions. The team spent about 11 days on the continent. The leader is back and the rest of the team is expected to return to Goa on or around the 20th of February, 1982.

The successful landing of the expedition on Antarctica is one more proof, if such be needed, that Indian scientists and technologists have the capability to undertake the most hazardous and complex tasks. I am sure hon. Members will wish me to convey their congratulations to the entire team. We also acknowledge with appreciation the valuable supporting services provided by the Indian Navy. When the data are analysed, they should throw important light on the history of Antarctica and its effect on the climate of the Indian

* Making a Statement on the Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica, *R.S. Deb.*, 19 February, 1982, cc. 277–82.

Ocean region. In undertaking this advanced work India has now joined a select band of countries. The significance of this expedition for, and also its impact on, our younger generation will be as important as its scientific accomplishment. I hope it will imbue our younger generation with scientific temper and encourage them to take a keener interest in the oceans and their exploration. Let pride in achievement urge us forward to greater efforts.*

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Sir, it is obvious that in a matter like this, there is no question of political motivation except perhaps in the sense which I mentioned in the statement, *i.e.*, of pride in the nation and its achievement and in furthering its national interests.** I have outlined what the Expedition was able to do and what we hope for. We hope further data will be forthcoming from our Station there. This can be most useful to our farmers as well as to other sections of the people. That was the major motivation. Also, of course, I feel that there is no reason why any part of the globe should be reserved entirely for the affluent and richer countries and not be open for a country like ours. I request my friend opposite not to put too much trust in what he reads in newspapers, specially those which have been consistently uncharitable about India.

So far as the vessel used is concerned, we do not have a vessel at this moment which has the experience of such conditions of navigating between icebergs and so on. This particular vessel has been on such expeditions before and has an experienced crew.

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So far as the question of the treaty is concerned, I do not know why we have not signed it before. There must have been some good reason. But the matter will certainly be gone into again.

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* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi in Lok Sabha also (*L.S. Deb.*, 19 February, 1982, cc. 425-28).

** Shri Shiv Chandra Jha sought a clarification from the Prime Minister about the reported American Statement that the Indian Expedition to Antarctica was politically motivated. He also mentioned that the newspapers had reported that the vessels used were not ours and had been hired from abroad. Shri Jaswant Singh wanted to know as to why India was not a signatory to the agreement on the Antarctica ?

5

PARLIAMENTARY AND CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

Fifty-fifth Report of the PAC*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have not very much more to say because most of the points have been met. I should like to express my deep appreciation of the guidance which you have given to this debate. It is because of that I feel hon. Members have used a considerable restraint and this has not been the mudslinging session which we had expected, and for that I am grateful to you and also to the hon. Members opposite.

I should like to assure the House and, I think, I have done so on previous occasions also, that I am second to none in supporting the view that all those who are guilty or corrupt should be punished for their actions. I assure the House that I shall not give protection to any such people. But, at the same time, I do have the responsibility to see that there is no sort of witch-hunting or general allegations which lead to a situation where the administration is paralysed.

I am referring now not only to the remarks that were made about Ministers but even what was earlier said about our civil servants and officials. They are not in the House to defend themselves. Yet they do bear a heavy responsibility in the Government of the country. It is possible that some of them may not be upto standard; it is possible that some of them may be corrupt or incompetent. But, I think the sort of sweeping generalisations, as are sometimes made from the Opposition Benches, are unfortunate and far from cleaning up the service. I think, they do a great deal of harm because this only results in delays which lead again to greater corruption and complications.

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By and large, I think our administrative service has a high reputation not only in our country but also in the view of experts who come and look at it from abroad. So, I would only say that we do not want to do anything which would create a feeling of uncertainty or uneasiness in them and reduce their effectiveness because, as I said earlier, much depends on their functioning. At the same time, I would repeat what I said earlier that wherever there is anything wrong, it has to be cleaned up. I do not want wrong-doing. I do want to look under the carpet and see what is wrong, not only what is wrong on the top but also what is wrong inside.

Some hon. Members said something about the system. I agree there also that the system is responsible for a great deal; that is not as it should be. But this is something that cannot

* Participating in the debate on the Motion regarding the Fifty-fifth report of the Public Accounts Committee, *L.S. Deb.*, 22 August, 1966, cc. 6217-24.

unfortunately be cleaned with one sweep. You have to look at all these things in detail and one by one. Unfortunately general remarks like those made receive so much publicity here and abroad that again action does not become easier but is made more difficult.

For the PAC we have the highest respect. I had told you some time ago of the Government's decision to have the Inquiry Committee as recommended in the PAC's report. At that time it was somehow felt that we should not make this announcement and, therefore, we did not say anything about it. Later—I think it was on the 12th August—the Minister of Iron and Steel conveyed this decision in writing to the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. This Committee will go into all matters and when their findings are before me. I shall certainly see that appropriate action on the basis of the Committee's recommendations is taken. More than that, the House will obviously not expect me to say at this stage and indeed it will be contrary to the accepted propriety to do so.

There is sometimes a tendency to jump to conclusions that, because some matters are before the Committee of Inquiry, the people concerned are necessarily guilty. It is perhaps this kind of presumption that creates resistance to inquiry but, as I said, we have taken the decision.

Now it is significant that the 55th Report does not contain any recommendation for any specific action; I do not think it casts any doubt about the *bona-fides* of my colleague, Mr. Subramaniam. He has explained the position in the House on several occasions and you, Mr. Speaker, were yourself pleased to rule that he had not committed any breach of privilege. I was impressed by the fact that many Opposition speakers, who were severely critical, did not suggest any dishonourable motives for the Minister's revision of his order. Judgement in such matters, as he himself has said, is necessarily subjective in character and it is possible that the reasons for such a judgement may seem obscure after a lapse of time.

In the light of what I have said, I hope that all hon. Members will agree to withdraw the various substitute motions.

There is one thing which I forgot to mention; it is that the ban which Mr. Subramaniam had placed continues on this firm. When it was extended to cover other areas with which this firm is concerned, the firm has gone to court and a stay order on Government has been issued.

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*Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon. Members have got rather excited, especially hon. Members of the Opposition, and when they are excited and angry they are apt to the swept away by their own eloquence. I hope they will excuse me if I am not swept away, nor even impressed, by this eloquence, because it merely hides the hollowness of their arguments. This is not the first time we have had such excitement, nor is it the first time that not only

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* Participating in the debate on the Motion regarding the Fifty fifth report of the Public Accounts Committee, *R.S. Deb.*, 27 August 1966, cc. 4476-80.

one Minister but the entire Government has been asked to resign. This, in fact, is a regular feature of this House and it has also become an unfortunate thing.....

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Here also I have heard this demand earlier on. Therefore, Sir, this type of eloquence neither moves me, nor convinces me, nor makes any difference in my thinking. Sir, I have a very responsible job on hand. It is to guide this country at the most critical period of its history; it is to guide the people through at a time of great suffering and hardship and it is at this time all efforts are being made to misguide the people, misguide the people not only in the matter of character assassination of which we have become familiar in these last years but misguide them even in things which are vital to their very existence, in the matter of food, delivery of food, distribution of food. Just now we are facing a strike in Bengal which, if it goes through, will greatly prevent food reaching a large number of people because it affects the drivers of trucks, those who are supposed to take the stocks of food.

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It is not irrelevant. I am just saying how the Opposition works up an atmosphere*...

I think hon. Members who have strayed so far away from the matter on hand are hardly in a position to say that somebody else is off the point.

However, Sir, I do not wish to go into all these matters here. I have said before, and I repeat today, and I shall continue to repeat, that I shall be second to none in seeing that anybody who is guilty of corruption, anybody who is guilty of wrong doing, is punished, but I must say equally strongly and with all the emphasis at my command that I am not going to be bullied, not by the Opposition, not by anybody at all. Sir, I think the way the Opposition is trying to take this country is disgraceful. Are we a nation of corrupt people? Who is there who can say that every Indian is corrupt, every firm is corrupt, every Minister is corrupt ? Is this not the most utter nonsense ? Is this not something which has brought disrepute to our country all over the world, in the Press of the world, in the eyes of the world ? (*Interruptions*)

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Several Members of the Opposition have levelled a general charge of corruption against the Government, not only against the Minister for Food. I have been sitting here all day. You are quite free to look up the records after the debate is over. This charge has been levelled. I know there are faults in the Government; I know that we are not perfect. I know equally well that no other Government is going to be more perfect. I know that if we make mistakes it is because we are human beings. Whenever any point of corruption has been shown up it has been gone into and people have been punished. It is not a matter, it is not something which always comes in the open but nevertheless it is something that is being done all the time. Everything that has come to my notice has immediately been enquired

* Responding to Shri A.P. Chatterjee's remark, "That is irrelevant ?"

into. Sometimes it takes time because many people have to be consulted and papers have to move from one place to another and so on and so forth. But never has anything like this been hidden. Therefore I want to repeat that in this matter, as in any other matter, we shall certainly take all steps which have to be taken. Sir, it was on the 4th of August, you will remember, that I came to you accompanied by two other Ministers to inform you of our decision to set up this Committee of Enquiry. It was long ago but for some reason we were advised that we should not announce it publicly. Therefore there was delay in the announcement. It was I think—I do not have the exact date—on the 12th August that the Minister of Iron and Steel wrote to the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee informing him of this decision. This Committee is in complete accordance with the recommendation of the P.A.C. I should like to announce, Sir, the membership of the Committee. It will consist of as Chairman, Shri A.K. Sircar, *ex*-Chief Justice of India, Shri V.S. Hejmadi, former Chairman of the U.P.S.C., Shri P.C. Padhi, former Chairman of the Central Board of Revenue and a former Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General. Now under the Commissions of Inquiry Act we can confer upon this Committee all the powers that the Committee may require in order to make a full and complete investigation into all the transactions referred to in the Report of the P.A.C. I should like to assure the House that we on this side are as anxious as those sitting opposite to have a thorough probe into the action of everyone who has committed any default or any irregularity and this Committee will be able effectively to carry out this probe.

Since I am on my feet I would like to add just one other point about officials. It has been a custom, Sir, that the names of officials will not be taken on the floor of the House because they are not here to defend themselves. As with Ministers or anybody else or with officials, if they are guilty, if anything comes up against them, an enquiry will certainly be made and if they are guilty they will be punished but to create this kind of atmosphere, I must submit, Sir, has created uncertainty in the Government. It creates hesitancy in taking decisions and it does slow down the whole business of Government. Some hon. Members were surprised at the disposal of a file in 48 hours. I might inform them—though I am naturally not able to speak for every Minister—that the files in my Department are cleared within 24 hours with rare exceptions. So, Sir, we want to certainly maintain that. I think our administrative service has a high reputation here and abroad and it is comparable to the administration of any country. Therefore while we should not condone any wrong doing—I have repeated this several times and I hope there will be no misgiving on this point—at the same time I must appeal to all concerned that they should not in any way do anything which will reduce the efficiency and the efficacy of the services or demoralise them in any way.

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I am sorry that some may be inefficient; some may have other faults but certainly a general charge cannot be levelled against the whole service* and I hope that in the interests of efficiency and good Government we will keep these matters in view when we make such allegations.

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* Replying to Shri A.P. Chatterjee's comment, "If they have any efficiency".

Privy Purses and Privileges of Former Rulers*

Sir I beg to move :

"That the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India, be taken into consideration."

Sir, this is a historic Bill, for, it represents an important step in the further democratisation of our society.

Naturally, our minds go back to our freedom struggle. One objective of that struggle was to free ourselves from foreign domination. The other which was no less important was to bring about an egalitarian society in which social divisions and disparities would be abolished.

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A special characteristic of our freedom movement was that it recognised no class distinction and sought to protect no privileges. Some leaders of the movement were intellectual giants ; yet all worked together as political equals. We have not been able to establish a society of complete equality, but we can claim that we are still engaged in this mighty endeavour.

The Bill has to be viewed against this background. It represents the momentum of social change in our country. I should like to assure the princes that there is no animus in it against any individuals. The manner in which we propose to bring about this important change is in keeping with our democratic tradition of achieving far-reaching and even revolutionary changes peacefully, through consultation, through debate and through parliamentary approval.

The initiative for the integration of the country came from the people's leaders, leaders of our democratic moment and an important part of this was the heroic struggle of the States' people. This is not to say that we minimise the cooperation given by the rulers and their constructive role in the unification of the country soon after the achievement of Independence. They have contributed to the political, social and cultural life of the community. Many former rulers are held in highesteem by the people of the areas over which they once ruled, and some have been elected to this House by them.

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* While moving the Constitution (Twenty-fourth Amendment) Bill, 1970 for consideration of Lok Sabha, *L.S. Deb.*, 1 and 2 September, 1970, cc. 261-64 & 287-93. The Bill, as passed by the Lok Sabha, was rejected by the Rajya Sabha on 5 September , 1970.

This public regard, I am confident, will not be diminished in any manner. Indeed, if I may say so, it will be considerably enhanced, if at this time, the rulers cooperate with the Government in doing away with certain institutions which are not in harmony with a society striving for equality and social justice.

The present Bill seeks to omit articles 291, 362 and clause 22 of article 366. The intention of Government is to discontinue the privy purses, abolish or restrict the privileges and abolish the concept of rulership.

In a letter which I wrote to the rulers, I had categorically stated that the amending Bill had been introduced in Parliament and would come up for consideration and passage in the current session, and I had told them that there was no intention to cause hardship to them or to injure their self–respect and that the Government would make some transitional arrangements.

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The transitional arrangements have not yet been worked out in detail. The Government's broad approach was indicated. I mentioned the suggestion that the actual payment of transitional allowances to be made to each ruler should be based on a multiple which would be higher for those with lower purses and lower for those with higher purses. The total payment would be such as would help the rulers to adjust to changed circumstances. I had also said that the Government was ready to further discuss the details of the scheme with the rulers.

Some Members may question such consultations. Others may advocate that nothing should be given. But this is not our way. The President himself had mentioned the Government's intention to give transitional allowances. For these past six months, I had hoped that without prejudice to our stand to abolish privy purses and privileges, it would be possible to reach some agreements. It is a matter of regret that this attempt on our part appears to have been misinterpreted.

However even now I sincerely hope that wiser counsels will prevail.

Some princes and their friends have claimed that the Bill which I am placing before this House is repugnant to morality. I can only say that it would be unthinkable for me to come before this august House, which represents the constituted will of our people, to ask them to enact something which is not in conformity with the precepts of morality.

History is replete with instances of customs, practices and enactments which were regarded as sacrosancts in one age and inhuman in the next. All the great reformers of our country have fought against customs and practices which were unjust and which perpetuate inequality but which earlier had been regarded as justified. I am convinced that while there exists such poverty and inequality in our country, there can be no immorality involved in wanting and working to end them.

The continuance of hereditary titles, customary rights, special privileges and privy purses without any relatable functions and responsibilities is incompatible with our democratic Constitution, the spirit of the times and the demand of changed circumstances.

In the 20 years since the privy purse settlements were made, many things have changed. Many hereditary rights and unearned incomes have been restricted. We have done away with a series of privileges and vested interests. In Parliament and in the State Assemblies, we have adopted laws to check the concentration of economic power, both rural and industrial. All this was done through open discussion and parliamentary debate. Changes do bring difficulty and necessitate adjustments, but they are inevitable. Historical forces are irreversible. The choice is clear. Either we bring about change peacefully and with consent or changes will come in a manner which, I am sure, this Parliament and this country would not like.

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The legislative measure before the House is a Constitution Amendment Bill. It will have to be passed by the requisite majority. It will be for the House, irrespective of party affiliations, to show a sense of history and to consider whether a princely order with attendant rights and privileges should continue indefinitely in a society striving for equality and social justice...

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*Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is not surprising that this Bill should have received such wide support from different sections of the House. It is not surprising also that two of the Opposition parties should oppose the Bill so vehemently.

One of the speeches was a masterpiece of beautiful packaging, of beautiful words, with no substance; nor was the speech of the Maharaja of Dhrangadhra surprising. He was born and brought up in a particular millieu. He and his friends are personally involved. He has his point of view, which he has always expressed openly and in the most chaste English. He spoke of the reference to the Supreme Court. But, since this is one of the amendments, I shall deal with the amendments, when we take them up.

But, there is another party of my hon. friends opposite. It is difficult to know what to say about them. I have long since stopped being surprised by either their words or their deeds.

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Sir, Government has examined all the constitutional and legal implications of this Bill. We have taken legal advice on the question of referring this matter to the Supreme Court. But the advice of the highest law officers was that the proposed Bill is constitutional and legally in order, and that it is therefore not necessary to refer the matter to the Supreme Court.

Now, as I was saying, I have long since stopped being surprised by what some of my hon. friends opposite say and do.

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* *L.S. Deb.*, 2 September, 1970.

- When Shri Morarji Desai rose to lead the opposition to the Bill, the thought came to my mind, of the Kauravas setting up Bhishma Pitamah to plead their case. It was his lot to give a moral facade to an indefensible case.

Shri Morarji gave rather a one-sided view. Other Members have also mentioned that negotiations with the princes did help us at that time. But, let us not forget that had the princes taken any other course at that time, the reaction of the people would have been very different and I doubt if we would have been able to control the situation. Maybe, it would have created difficulties; I am sure it would have. But, perhaps, it would have solved some problems also.

Some point was made about Shri Chavanji having suddenly thought of the abolition of the Privy Purses as a political device. I do not remember now, but I do not think that Shri Y.B. Chavan was a member of the Working Committee in 1953 which was when this matter was first taken up there. I myself became a member in 1955, and there was hardly a year when this matter was not taken up and discussed. And year by year, almost month by month, the pressure from our party was growing that something should be done about it, long before the 1967 elections. So, either people do not know this or knowing it they deliberately want to distort facts.

Many points of view have been put forward, which are not in correct perspective. It was said, for instance, that the agreements and compacts with the rulers had been entered into before the Constitution came into force and that the Constitution only put a seal on those agreements, and, therefore, although the constitutional sanctions may go but the agreements would continue in force. Now, this view is based on a misunderstanding of the nature of these agreements. They are not contracts between individuals. They were political settlements which were followed by the political acts of the President in recognising the rulers under the Constitution. Some hon. Members said that the President has the right to recognise or derecognise a ruler and that the merger agreements are thus dependent on the continued recognition by the President of a ruler as a ruler. It was suggested that the Government could have discontinued the privy purse without involving the Parliament in a Constitutional Amendment Bill. From the nature of the merger agreements, it was possible for the Government to do so. However, Government preferred to bring about a change by the democratic method of discussion and ascertaining the collective will of the people as reflected in this House. Government's willingness to subject this proposal to a vote by the special majority required for a constitutional amendment reflects their desire to abide by the highest conventions of democratic processes.

Another criticism was of the omission of articles 291 and 362 and clause 22 of 366 and the retention of article 363. I would not deal with this matter because I think Shri Y.B. Chavan has dealt with it. It must be recognised that such settlement must be subject to the final arbitration of Parliament and not the courts and that is why the Constitution-makers decided to keep the agreements out of the courts.

A point was also made that the continuance of article 363 would deny the rulers even the ordinary right of a citizen. Surely this is a travesty of facts. The rulers have and will

continue to have the same rights and remedies as ordinary citizens. Their recourse to courts is barred only in respect of the special privileges they acquired through a political settlement. Today, totally unjustified political motives have been imputed to this Bill. We have been charged that the decision to abolish privy purses and privileges was because some rulers had contested the elections against the Congress. It has also been said that we planned to take time to strike political bargains with the rulers in settling the transitional arrangements. All this will come up in the Bill for the transitional allowances will thus come before Parliament, and hon. Members will have ample opportunity to speak about it in the House. The actual payment is supposed to be based on a multiple of the privy purse. I am sure they will realise that in such a principle which we accepted there will be no scope whatsoever for individual bargaining.

Now, much was said about heritage. I am also proud of the Indian heritage. But as I said yesterday, we do not live in that heritage. Times change, everything in life is changing every minute, every second of the day, and we cannot keep old, outmoded methods or customs which have no place in contemporary life. Shortly before I got up, we were offered a high level speech, but I am afraid much of it did not strike me as high-level. If the hon. Member* will forgive me, I thought that much of his speech was full of the diversionary tactics which he was attributing to the Government, because all the various items were listed which have no relevance whatsoever to the matter in hand today...

We were told of special 'planes being despatched to Kerala.' Before also, we have heard the story of 'planes going to other States for different purposes.' I have still not been able to gather the information where the 'planes came from, who flew them, where they disappeared after their flights, and what problems were solved by their use.'

I also believe that all Members should vote as they think is right to do. I wish that the princes and some of their friends had also stuck to that belief and had not tried to put pressures on some of our Members (*Interruptions*). It is not our wish to do that.

Much was said about the people who lived in the princely States. You will have noticed that the most bitter speeches that were made yesterday and today were those by individuals who had the chance or ill-fortune to live in princely States. It is those people who feel more bitter about the whole question. We, who have not had that experience can afford to be generous. But even though I did not live in a princely State, I did have occasion to attend some of the meetings of the States' People's Conference. I know the deep feelings, the hurt, the atrocities and humiliations which were piled on our political workers in those days. We do not want to start recrimination against anybody. If there is to be such a debate, certainly we can have plenty to say. But I do not want to say it ; this is not the occasion. In fact, I have gone out of my way to ignore that side of it and have tried to see the brighter side of the picture. I think that the least that could have been done was for the princes also to try not to hark back to the times about which much can be said on the other side as well.

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* Shri Morarji Desai.

Now, when we talk of heritage, does it mean we want the old feudal customs to continue, the old feudal methods of functioning ? Have they been able to continue anywhere in the world ? They have not. We do not want them. The people do not want them and they will see that they go. It is where there is the least education that you find there is most consideration for such old customs and so on. As education spreads, as consciousness of their rights awakens amongst the people, there is revolt against injustice and inequality. I do not think it is a thing to be proud of that you do not have such a revolt in your States, because it shows that the people there are not politically conscious; it shows the people do not know what their rights are.

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There has also been talk about justice. Justice is a much misused word. I have asked before in this House : Justice for whom ? We do not want to do injustice even to one person or to two people or 200 and odd people. But as against them, there is the question of justice to some millions of people. I am not saying that the removal of the privy purses is going to solve the poverty problem or the unemployment problem or any of the other problems. We have not said it at any time, nor am I saying it now. But it is a step in a particular direction in which the country wants to go, and the country will go in spite of anybody. If we oppose the country in that, we also will be swept aside, I have no doubt about it.

The hon. Member said much about political moves and so on, but what seems strange to us is that this is the second occasion when we have heard him applauding the speech made by the hon. Member of the CPI (Marxist). So, it is evident that politics make strange bed-fellows. Our views are perfectly clear. It is not we who say that merely because a person is a Communist, he is bad. We are against certain policies, we are against certain methods, we are against violence. But here is somebody who does believe that the mere word Communist is an abuse, and then he thinks it is not strange at all that he should get together with one of the extreme Communist parties, whether on this issue or the issue of Kerala elections or some other issue. I do not mind, I am just pointing this out. It is for him to decide whom he wants to be with. As I said, the question is not whether individual Princes were good or bad, whether today they are good or bad. We are not concerned with their individual qualities, but it is a principle which is in question today. The members of the princely order look at the question from one angle, I must confess that we look at it from the opposite angle.

The Constitution-makers could not fore see all eventualities. We have had amendments to the Constitution before. We must make the Constitution such as will serve the aspirations and the needs of the Indian people. The only thing that matters is what is necessary for the welfare of the people of India. The hon. Member knows that it is not just our party which has been anxious to bring this Bill here. Many other parties, who are not Communists, have been and, are supporting it.

As I said earlier, I think this is an important step. It is very strange to hear that some people feel that this is a step to destroy them. On the contrary, I think this is a step that could strengthen them because now they can make a life on their feet, not on the basis of

what their forefathers did, not on the basis of money or something which is coming from the Government, but they can make a new life for themselves and, as I said, what sort of life it is, what sort of new heritage they give to future India is today in their hands.

The step we are going to take is an important step. In our segmented society, broken up by caste and creed, fragmented further by the concepts of hierarchy and graded privileges, a step, however small, which is directed towards the dissolution of vertical and horizontal division is a step in the direction of the democratisation of that society.

Personally, I feel that this is of far greater significance than all the arid controversies grabed in high sounding phrases. That is why I was pained to hear a doctrine propounded here so violently in contradiction to some of the basic and essential tenets of India's national movement. The basic tenet of our national movement lay in asserting the sovereignty of the people of India, both of British India and of the Indian States as against the sovereignty of the imperial crown and that of the princely order. The assertion of this principle amounts to fighting against the system and not against an individual.

So, in advocating the adoption of this Bill, there is no animus against individuals for we are fighting for a principle; we are fighting to take the country in a particular direction.

As I said yesterday, the Bill is of historic significance. Let us walk in step with the times; let the value of men not be judged by their wealth or rank.

With these words, I commend the motion to this august House. I hope that the other motions will be rejected. (*Interruptions*).

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*Mr. Chairman, I rise to move : "That the Bill forther to amend the constitution of India, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration...."

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My task today is considerably lightened because of the Resolution passed unanimously by this august House, not the other House, but by this august House on the 19th....

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It was passed on the 19th December, 1969 asking the Government to take all legal and other steps for the abolition of the privy purses and privileges of the ex-Rulers. I was also helped by a speech by another Member of Shri Mishra's party on that occasion or on another occasion in this House urging us to hurry up and bring for ward this Bill. I think the word used was 'forthwith'. This Bill gives concrete shape to those sentiments. It seeks to omit articles 291, 362 and clause (22) of article 366. The intention of the Government is to discontinue the privy purses, abolish or restrict the privileges and abolish the concept

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* While moving the Constitution (Twenty-fourth Amendment) Bill, 1970 for consideration of Rajya Sabha and replying to the debate on it, *R.S. Deb.*, 4 & 5 September, 1970, cc. 34, 44–46 & 87–98.

of rulership. This Bill provides an opportunity to hon. Members to redeem their own Resolution. In the context of that Resolution, anything one says would be redundant and would be like preaching to the converted. I shall, therefore, desist from this superfluous exercise. The House knows the feelings of our people and their urge for greater equality. The compulsions of social change and the democratisation of our society were admirably expressed by many hon. Members of this House on the previous occasion and the Bill before you today echoes the feelings which were then expressed. We are convinced that the indefinite continuance of hereditary titles and customary rights, special privileges and privy purses, without any relatable functions and responsibilities, are incompatible with the spirit of the modern age, the demands of the changed circumstances and the political and social evolution of the life of the nation along democratic lines. In the conduct of human affairs, there are always two broad points of view. There is the point of view which fixes on the past and on the desire to conserve all that is old and familiar. The other point of view recognizes what is good in the past heritage and tradition of a nation but refuses to be imprisoned or shackled down by them. It seeks to synthesise the best of the old with all that is worthwhile and enduring in the new. It recognizes that history is irreversible and change inevitable. Ours is the second point of view and judging by the wide measure of support which the Bill has received in the other House, this view is happily shared by a majority of political parties and the overwhelming majority of the people of our great country. It has been our way to try to do things in a manner which is the least abrasive. Hence I tried to talk with the Princes to find a solution which without in any way compromising our stand or our commitment to our party and our people would help to smoothen the path of change. Unfortunately the sincere effort on our part was misinterpreted and nothing came of it.

It is not our intention to cause hardship to the ex-rulers or to injure their self-respect. In keeping with this point of view the rulers were told and the President said in his opening Address to Parliament that Government would make transitional arrangements. Although these have not yet been worked out in detail, our broad approach is that the payment of these allowances to each ruler should be based on a multiple which would be higher for those receiving lower purse and lower for those receiving higher purses. The total payment would be such as to enable the rulers to adjust to the changed circumstances.

This Bill is the culmination of an important aspect of our freedom struggle. This House showed a sense of history in its resolution of the 19th December, 1969. I now invite it to the occasion and to pass the Bill with a tremendous majority, if not unanimity.

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Mr. Chairman, Sir, my reply should have been an opportunity to answer the major arguments raised in the debate but in spite of what my hon. friend opposite, Shri S.N. Mishra, has so graciously, described as my minute observation. I was not able to discern any such major argument put forward against this Bill. We found the venerable Member, Shri Ruthnaswamy of the Swatantra Party teaching us what socialism is. We found Shri Babubhai Chinai trying to interpret my own father to me. I think hon. Members here and the people of Bombay know how ardent a follower he was of my father and my father's policies. (*Interruptions*)

When one takes Shri Mishra's wayward rhetoric seriously, what his Party said to-day is such a clear and blatant repudiation of what they have so openly professed only yesterday that I wonder whether they have elevated pointlessness into a programme. We have heard long quotations from Sardar Vallabhai Patel. Those who have quoted them, could have used the same quotations a little earlier, perhaps in the AICC meeting. It is quite some time since this resolution was passed in Delhi. It is true that when it was passed, I was not present. It is true that I was a little disturbed at its passing, not because I was against the resolution but, as Mr. Mishra would say, at the manner of its passing.

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*Those who have since opposed it, they had many an opportunity to reopen the issue in the Working Committee and in many subsequent Sessions of the AICC or the plenary Sessions of the Congress. But it was not brought before these bodies for a very good reason, because they knew that, if they brought it back, it would be passed again and over again. So now, just because there is a division in the party, to go back on their own commitments– may be somebody's version of honesty or integrity, but I do not think that is the way the world or the people of India will look at this matter. Now somebody else also said that the wisdom of the Agreements was not questioned at that time. My hon. friend, I think it was Goswamiji, said that he himself questioned it. I certainly know that I questioned it, and the States' Peoples' Conference in every State had questioned these Agreements. I know that in every province there were many who questioned the wisdom of these Agreements and I can say that I was amongst those who questioned these Agreements. And most of the Youth Congress at that time had questioned this as indeed we questioned many other things that happened. I had also questioned in manner in which we kept the administrative system as I do question it even now.

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There was a body of the Congress Youth of which I was a member. Now, whether we had one name or they had something else added to the name, I do not know. But we certainly regarded ourselves as Congress youths. Whether there was a registered name or not is not the point here. The point is that the younger people of the Congress did exist, that they did meet in a separate body, apart from the AICC and other Congress bodies, and that I was a member of those groups. Surely I know of the meetings I attended.

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So these things were questioned then, but now we know that many more people question them, as we can see; at that moment we also wondered that perhaps this is the right way, we might think differently, the elders are proposing something. They know better. They have more experience. They think this is the right thing to do.

Having once expressed our views, we did not make an issue of it, or even broadcast it. But now that we look back at it, what is the view, what is the view not only of those of

* Replying to the debate in Rajya Sabha, 5 September, 1970, cc. 87-98.

us who were involved then but of the many people who were not asked for their opinion or who were not involved in these questions then ? This is the question before us today, and it concerns the nation. Well it is the nation's desire that as things have changed we must change with the times. My hon. friend, Shri Rajnarain, never loses an opportunity to snipe at me... but this time I will say that there is some truth in what he said. And it is not he who is saying it; I have said it from the public platform on almost every occasion in every public meeting since our Bangalore Session. I have said that it is not I who am showing a new light to the people, it is the people who are showing a new light to us. I have said on countless occasions that the time has come when we must follow the people's light. But why is it that we have this great division in our party ? Sir, I think everybody knows why it really happened. Everybody knows that the seeds of it were there from the time of these Agreements and before. Everybody knows that there was a division in the thinking of the party. There was one section which wanted socialism, which wanted major changes, and there was another section which thought that independent India could grow and prosper within the old structure. There was that division and it does not matter who gets up and says that it was not there. They cannot change the fact. This is what came to the fore in our party, in our times. It does not mean that we can do some magic or that by using the word 'socialism' we think we can change everything. We know we cannot and we have said so, but we do know that we have made a beginning. We do know that we have taken steps which will make it difficult for anybody to reverse the trend, no matter who runs the Government tomorrow; and that is my concern. It is not my concern that I shall stay in power or be the Prime Minister. Had that been my concern, I would not have taken the number of risks which I have taken. But why am I taking these risks? It is because I know that each one of these steps, once taken, will be irreversible, no matter what happens and that is the important fact. Nobody is going to change what we do here.

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I was saying that these steps have taken the country in a particular direction and this direction cannot now be reversed. I will give one small example of this. Our hon. Member from the Jan Sangh, even he, who is opposed to the whole idea behind the things which we want to do, the direction in which we want to take the country, had to say here ; We have no fascination for the princely order. He could not get up here and say : I support the princely order.

Our good friends, the syndicate group, could not, whether they are supporting the abolition or not, get up and say : We will oppose the Bill because we are opposed to the concept of the Bill. They do not have that courage. I would have admired them if, wanting to go back on their policy, they had got up and said : We oppose this Bill. But 'No'. They want to please the Princes and they want to please the people. You can fool some people for some time but not all the people all the time.

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As far as I am concerned, I have only one reply, that I am prepared for the people to judge all these years*. When the people say 'we do not want you,' I will very gladly resign...

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We are prepared to stand in front of the people with all our programmes, all our deeds. My friend, Shri Niren Ghosh, said, as if he was discovering some great dark buried secret, that transitional allowances are being made. Did not the President make this announcement in his opening Address to Parliament ? Did I not write openly to the Princes ? Did I not say it in the other House...

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Mr. Niren Ghosh, I was listening very carefully.** You said you were uncovering secrets and all sorts of things. That is why I am saying that we have done nothing in secret. We have done nothing in such a manner. Everything we have done and everything we stand for is out in the open before the people of India and before this House. In this connection, I would also like to say that again my friend, Shri Mishra, said : What was the necessity of bringing this to the House ? The Government could have done it on its own. Certainly the Government could and the Government still can do it on their own. There is nothing to stop it. Why ? Because we think in a democracy it is better to bring this to Parliament. We think that it is better to see that the majority is behind us. This we have now proved to the country...

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I will assure Mr. Bhupesh Gupta that if he is referring to me, I have not lost my temper now for many many years, and I have no intention of losing it again. Certainly the sort of remarks that were made from that side are not worth anybody's losing his temper.

Now the question was what would happen if the Princes had not signed the agreements. Mr. Chairman, is there any doubt about it as to what would have happened ? In free India if they had not signed the agreement, would not the Government have used all its strength to do something about it, and would not all the people have risen to do something about it ? Certainly there would have been bloodshed, certainly there would have been disturbance. But nobody can say that the Princely States would have continued as they were continuing. I was surprised to hear the use of the word 'sovereignty' in this connection. What does it mean ? Can anybody in this House say that they were sovereign under the British ? What right did they assert except the right of making money ? Did one of them go against the British Government in the smallest possible thing ? How can they use this word in this connection and demean the word 'sovereignty' ? Let us see the reality of the situation. Are we living in 1970 or are we living in 1870 ? Some things have happened in the world, not only in our country but all over the world. I am not concerned with the quality of the

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* Responding to Shri Sundar Singh Bhandari's comment, "That applies to you also".

** Replying to Shri Niren Ghosh's observation, "I said this House passed a Resolution barring that".

Princes. I know that like all men some were good, some indifferent, some have even been bad, some have neglected their people, some have done good work for their States like education, health measures, roads, parks and so on. I am not against the Princes at all. I want to assure the hon. House that this Bill is not directed against the Princes individually or even as a group. This Bill is against a system. We are against the feudal system. It is not just something that has come to our heads today. This was the whole point of the freedom struggle. The question was not merely that we drive out the foreign Government. It was that within the country all such feudal structures should be changed. If we have not been able to change them, I certainly say it was our mistake. I have no doubt about it. It was our mistake that for so many years we have not been able to change the feudal structure. It is not only a question of Princes. That happens very much lower down the line also. That is why there is that treatment of the Harijans. It is the same attitude of mind that one man is superior to another man. Why ? Because he has money, he has rank. Do we subscribe to this theory ?

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The ICS people will also be dealt with*. It does not mean that if you have not dealt with all you cannot deal with one thing. This is a new argument that we have heard today from some of the gentlemen opposite. If you cannot do the journey in one leap, then you cannot do the first phase also. Therefore, before there was the aeroplane nobody would have gone to any place. As I was saying, I hold no animus against the Princes. That is why we tried to talk to them. As I made it clear in my opening remarks I was not going against our commitment to this House or our commitment to our party. But we did feel that if we could come to some agreement, it would smoothen the path, it would make the change easier. Perhaps they thought that by prolonging the agony of negotiations, the Bill would be postponed, although all along I had said that I wanted to talk, but we were committed to bringing the Bill in this session. This was not kept in doubt at any meeting, in any session. I have no hesitation in saying that if this matter has come in this way, it is because of those amongst the Princes who are known as the hardliners, those who wanted to hang on more tightly to whatever they had. Had those who were willing to talk been given their way, some understanding could have been reached in a much more graceful manner. This is not a new thing.

Sir, everywhere when something new happens, the people concerned try to hang on to the old. But nowhere have they been able to resist the new. These Princes are very high-up people. The motor car came in England. Perhaps you all remember that those people who were concerned with horses and horse carriages and everything that had to do with them, they said that the motor car should not be allowed; they were in danger. Many people helped them; the British M.Ps. helped them. But the wise amongst those people said, "No. This thing is here. We cannot stop the car. Let us learn something about it. Let us become mechanics. Let us become drivers". They took that path and they suddenly got new opportunities, new jobs and they became high in the new hierarchy. And those who said

* Replying to a Member's remark, "What about the ICS ?"

they will have only the horse-carriages, they were, little by little, made jobless and finished off. This is the way of the world. It is not the way that I am advocating. It is the way of the world since time immemorial. The old has to give way to the new. And only those amongst the old who adapt themselves and find a place amongst them.

It is not I or any group who is removing them. These are the forces of history that march and make these changes....

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Pushpabenji, in her usual quiet and effective manner, suggested that there should not be only one-sided criticism, that there should be a balanced appraisal. Now I wish that she could have given that advice to some of her party Members who were speaking about us.

Incidentally, Sir, I was deeply shocked to hear from opposite–I do not remember which party–that the Princes are being brought down to the level of "ordinary citizens". Sir, I might say that nobody should use a phrase like this. What can be better than being a citizen of this great country of India ? Does a person become greater because he is called His Highness ? This is the mentality that we are fighting and which we will continue to fight while it exists in any corner of India. And this is what we endeavoured to fight during the freedom struggle.

Now I come to Shri Rajnarain's amendment, the S.S.P. amendment. Several other Members have also urged that no compensation should be paid to the Princes on the abolition of their privy purses. Now, it is our opinion and the legal opinion also that the privy purse is not a property and thus there is no question whatsoever of paying any compensation. However, there is the human aspect. I do not think it would be fair to put an abrupt end to the payment of the privy purses without providing some means for the families and the dependents of these former Rulers to adjust to this new situation. And it is in that light that the transitional allowances should be viewed. The same holds good for the date, *i.e.* the 15th October, when it comes into effect.

Now, Sir, as I said earlier, this Bill is not in any way against the Princes. On the other hand, I would very humbly suggest that I think it is in their interest because in a free country, I think, it is the due of every boy and every girl, of every man and every woman, to stand on his or her feet, by his own or her own merit. This is the great opportunity which we are giving to them. They are not poor people, nor do we wish to make them poor. They have great advantage of having had the best of education. We want that education to be used for the welfare of their own people and their own country. I think, Sir, as I have said on an earlier occasion, that there can be no greater gift to anybody than this, that they use their energy, their wealth, their talents for the good of the nation. This is our intention in this Bill. So, I hope that those hon. Members who are making an excuse that merely because they do not like the manner of it, therefore, they would rather defeat and wipe off the whole Bill, will reconsider the matter and will vote at least for this first phase. About what they do in the next phase, of course, it will be debated all over again. Now, one point which

was constantly made was that we have delayed bringing the question of allowances here merely because we want to do something underhand. Sir, this is very unworthy of the Members who have made such a remark, because whatever allowances are made, the matter will come before the House and again it will be before the hon. Members to accept or to reject, and there will no doubt be a full and frank debate. I hope that the hon. Members from the S.S.P. will, therefore, withdraw their amendments, since I have made it clear that it is not compensation which we are giving. Now, Sir, it was understandable that so many of the speeches should be concerned with the past. But, Sir, this Bill is opening one of the gates towards a more egalitarian future for our people. Sir, I move that the Bill be taken into consideration.

The Constitution : Not A Static Document*

.... In the speech which I made when I was introducing this Bill** here I stated clearly that we expect obstacles at every step in our march towards progress, towards bringing about a better life for our people, towards bringing about greater equality among our people. What is astonishing today is not what we might be feeling, but the reaction of those who consider themselves the victors, why are they so excited and upset? That is what I am wondering.

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This is the impression that we get from your speech.*** It is writ large on your face. I can see this. The second point is whether we shall send instructions to the States and various people. I think that this point is covered by the answer I gave some time ago, so also is the point regarding bilateral talks. Both these points have been covered. We have to look into all aspects of the judgement and this will take time. Then there was something said about sacrifice. Sir, I think the House itself can judge how seriously this point can be taken. When we compare the sacrifices, what does it mean ? The territory belonged to the people. Were the people of India slaves of these people ? Were the people of the princely States not citizens of India ? What does it mean, that they gave up territory ?

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May be you have that view, but it is not our view at all.**** (*Interruptions*). I am not yielding. To equate these people with the lakhs and lakhs of people who sacrificed their lives and their all during the freedom movement, I think this is sacrilege and desecration of the history of India.

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We have already said that so far as this matter is concerned we will take the appropriate constitutional measures.

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* Replying to a Calling Attention regarding the situation arising out of the decision of the Supreme Court on the Presidential Order de-recognising the rulers, *R.S. Deb.*, 16 December, 1970, cc. 101-116.

** The Constitution (Twenty-fourth Amendment) Bill.

*** Responding to Shri S.N. Mishra's query, "Who is upset ?"

**** Replying to Shri Lokanath Misra's remarks, "I did not say that anybody was the slave of another. Was it not a sacrifice that they made ?"

The Constitution is clear and I think we can proceed according to the Constitution but the Constitution, as we have said and as other Members have said on various occasions, is not a static thing. The Constitution has been changed in other countries, it has been changed in our country too and if it is necessary to change it in the people's interest certainly we should do so and Government will think about it.

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The question is : What is the Constitution for ? What are laws for ? Laws are not dropped from the heavens; laws are made to make life more orderly for the people who live in this country. The Constitution is made so as to have better functioning. Laws are made by Parliament. Therefore it is possible to change the laws, it is possible to change the Constitution. This is obvious—democracy must mean the right of the largest number of the people. (*Interruptions*)

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Whether you talk of the Fundamental Rights or any other right, it does not mean that you can suppress the rights of some people for the sake of the rights of some of other people. This is evident in democracy.

Parliamentary Supremacy*

We have all listened with great attention to the speeches which have been made. I am sorry that some noise was made from this side. But the speeches also were highly provocative. I can understand Mr. Frank Anthony's anxiety and worry. I would only like to remind him that this Parliament did exist before the Golak Nath Case took place. This Parliament is only trying to restore the position...(*Interruptions*) Our party has always stood for minority rights. We have fought for them.

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...What I am saying is that there is no need for him to get so excited. These matters can be discussed in a calm way. If there is calmness on the other side, there will be calmness on this side. I think, it is very wrong to bring in the minorities in the manner in which it has been done...(*Interruptions*) If the minorities are suffering in our country, it is part of the larger economic problem. There are poor people amongst minorities and there are rich people amongst minorities. We can assure this honourable House that we shall always stand for the rights of those who have nobody to speak for them.

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**Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I shall not take much time of the House. Indeed, I would not have spoken at all, since all relevant and some irrelevant points have been made in the course of this debate which has been except for some aberrations, of a high order, as befits the occasion.

I would like to support what our hon'ble friend Shri Manoharan has said that today all of us remember and miss our bright-spirited collegue, Shri Nath Pai, whose Bill focussed our attention on this necessary Constitutional change. I am sure if he had been here, he would have made an impassioned speech on this subject.

I am intervening because I feel deeply and sincerely that this is a special moment.

In his otherwise brilliant speech, Shri Siddhartha Shankar Ray had a dig at non-lawyers. Far be it from me to scoff at lawyers, when there are so many distinguished ones in the

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* Participating in the debate during the introduction of the Constitution (Twenty-fourth Amendment) Bill, 1971, *L.S. Deb.*, 28 July, 1971, cc. 305–06.

** Participating in the debate on the Constitution (Twenty-fourth Amendment) Bill, 1971, *L.S. Deb.*, 4 August, 1971, cc. 263-71.

House. The legal profession has given some of the best minds and some of the greatest patriots to our country. I myself started life in very legal surroundings. My grandfather himself a lawyer of repute, attracted many legal luminaries to our house. But, over the years, one heard fewer arguments of jurisprudence and more and more about the problems of the people, the reality of the situation in which they found themselves, which was very far from the law as seen by lawyers. So, Shri K. Manoharan and I have at least one thing in common, which is that neither of us is a lawyer. While he was daring enough to venture into the sphere of law, I shall keep aloof from it. But I should like to answer only one point which does not strictly come into this debate but which he mentioned, which was the question of Centre-State relations and especially a phrase which he used when he said that every State must be an equal partner. I should like to assure him that every State is an equal partner. Today, whatever inequality there exists is due to many reasons; it is not due to the Centre or the attitude which the Centre takes. In the eyes of the Central Government, every State is equal and the Centre does its very best to give fair treatment to every single State, and we shall continue to do so. Naturally, we are always open to suggestions, and we always discuss matters about which a State has any grievance; and this discussion is a continuing one. There is hardly a day when we do not have a visit from a Chief Minister or some Ministers or officials from one State or another over some real or not–so–real grievance.

During this debate, it was interesting and educative to listen to our constitutional experts. But as a non-constitutional-expert, as a non-lawyer, I must say that it seems to me that the question at issue is not merely a legal or a constitutional one. The constitutional amendments which we have introduced embody and reflect the urges of our people. For some time, there has been a deliberate inflation of fears which to me seem to be unreal. A controversy has been generated as regards the supremacy of Parliament against the supremacy of the Constitution, as if these two were distinct concepts mutually exclusive and even perhaps antagonistic. Those who describe the issue in this manner conveniently forget that our Constitution was drafted on the fundamental assumption that our people owed unalterable allegiance to the principles of democracy. This faith in our people permeates our Constitution.

Several hon. Members have spoken of the confrontation between Parliament and the judiciary. There need not be a confrontation, and I think that to create an atmosphere of confrontation does not do us much good. I do not think that there is any real confrontation either, because each institution has its assigned place and role. We all know that there can be no third chamber and that no Constitution can be frozen into a static mould.

What do we see when we look at the world around us ? It would not take us long to discover that many an institution has collapsed, many a Constitution has been scrapped because it ceased to be an effective instrument for orderly change. That our Constitution and our democratic institutions have survived, when all around us there is a climate of tension and violence, is a tribute to the faith of our people in democratic ideals and also to the flexibility and responsiveness of our Constitution and our political institutions to the urges of our people.

While introducing this Bill, my colleague Shri H.R. Gokhale spoke of the arguments of those who opposed this Bill as being based on fear and nervousness, not on fact. I should like to dispel that fear and nervousness in the minds of our minorities in so far as their rights are concerned. I believe that protection to them can be guaranteed only by this Parliament. Mere constitutional devices cannot give this guarantee. History is replete with examples of constitutions being overthrown or thwarted. Therefore, a wider and deeper democracy, a wider and deeper commitment to secularism is a more durable guarantee of the rights of our minorities. My endeavour has been not to defeat parties but to educate the public and strengthen the people so that they themselves will not permit any curtailment of their rights. The protection of the rights of the minorities can be ensured only when the majority itself is convinced that its well being and progress is linked with a sense of security amongst the minority communities. In the ultimate analysis, it is only a sensitive and strong public opinion which can give real protection to the minorities.

The major premise of democracy is the will of the people as expressed through Parliament. As Prof. Dandavate said in his excellent speech, if our democracy goes berserk and becomes an instrument of oppression, our democracy would have failed and something else would have taken its place. If such turbulence were to take place in our country, holding the Constitution against the flood waters of right reaction or of violent revolution would not stem the tide.

Sir, Shyamnandan Mishra used a very meaningful phrase : 'If liberty dies in the hearts of men'. The same thing has been said in the Bible : 'We are the salt of the earth. But if the salt has lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?' So the strength can only be in the people. If we have any strength, we get it from the people and it is up to them to see that we do our duty by them and fulfil our promises to them.

Some people laughed when Shri Zia-ur-Rehman quoted an Urdu verse. But the message was clear and true enough. There is an unending attempt by vested interests to divide the people and to mislead the minorities. I am confident that our people are committed to democracy. They understand and respond to the need for a secular approach, the need for change within a democratic framework and the need to prevent narrow vested interests from obstructing the processes of change. We all know that change is a fact of life, whether we like it or not. We all know that the subtlest and cleverest arguments cannot bind us to the past.

Shri H.M. Patel spoke of reasonableness *versus* radicalism. If you look at the circumstances of life as it is in India, I see no reason in a denial of radical change. Whatever is made rigid, ceases to be living and organic and may become less and less reflective of the needs of a vital and dynamic people.

So what are the choices before us ? Can we cling to the status quo ? There is a crisis in the social order not only in India but in every country of the world and the choice in every country is whether changes can come about peacefully or whether they must be driven to violent means.

A little while ago, when one of our colleagues was speaking, I heard several Members from the Opposition saying 'He is twisting the meaning.' I think all those who have read

newspapers in the last months and all those who have followed the election campaigns will know where the twisting has taken place, how everything we have said has been twisted and misconstrued. One of the words which has lent itself to this misinterpretation is 'commitment'. It is a good word and no matter what anybody says about it, we believe in commitment and we shall continue to believe in commitment. I think in today's world, this is a word which has great significance for the future.

What are our commitments ? We are deeply committed to change the condition of the lives of millions of our people, the vast majority of whom live in great poverty. When we talk of the most urgent problems in the country which are the removal of poverty and the lessening of disparities, our slogans have been made the butt of jokes and of ridicule. Any subject, any question, any debate, has evoked the taunt, "What about *garibi hatao* ?" Surely, poverty is too agonising a state to be joked about except by those who have no idea of what it is and have no real sympathy with those who live in the state of poverty. If you want to look at the question seriously and sincerely, we know that the poverty of ages cannot be wiped out in a few weeks, a few months or even a few years. Anybody who pretends that he can do so is obviously trying to mislead the public.

We have never said that we can achieve this by a miracle; we have never said that it can be done by magic. We have always said that certain steps have to be taken, deliberate, determined steps, and by those steps we can remove, we will remove the poverty of this country.

But this also requires a change in social outlook. There is talk of compensation. Even today we have heard some of it. While my colleague was speaking, I heard Shri Piloo Mody say something about *chori*. He knows that this is a subject about which I feel very strongly and I would like to put my views before the House, as I have put them on previous occasions. Compensation for what ? When we talk of compensation, it is compensation for land, compensation for a palace or a big house. I should like to ask hon. Members, what about compensation for injustice ? What about compensation for forced labour, of the eviction of landless people, for land unfairly grabbed? What happens when a mill is closed, its machinery run down, its reserves eaten away, even provident funds diverted to private purposes ? A small man's business is closed and a partner driven to the street and other such iniquities of the capitalist system ?

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I am glad to see Shri Piloo Mody's reaction, but may be he thinks this applies only to a few people. *My colleague, Shri Mohan Kumara Mangalam, in his scientillating speech, said something about accumulated wealth. All the wealth is not accumulated. Many of us know, that whose who are today demanding compensation did not always own their property. (*Interruption*).

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* Responding to Shri Piloo Mody's remarks : "Why do you protect them, put a blanket over them ? Put them in Jail."

But he is not asking for compensation.* I remember specially a tribe, lot of minorities. There is a small group of people in the State of Bihar—they are called *Tana bhagat*. They are very small in number, simple and sincere and they were passionately devoted to freedom and they were among the first who came forward in the freedom struggle.

The British took away their lands and today we cannot give them that land. These people who were given that land by the British, regard it as their own property and they will demand compensation. Is this the sort of compensation that we should give ? It is the *Tana bhagat* who should get compensation for the land taken away from them. There are so many cases like this. I do not want to go into the question of Princes because that is coming up later, but there is plenty to say on that subject. Some of it I have referred to but there is more which any research can reveal.

We believe that the necessary social, political and economic processes which are involved in changing poverty must be carried out within a democratic framework. The vested interests have, as usual, raised a hue and cry, either through lack of understanding or deliberate mischief. As I said earlier they have misinterpreted many of the words which we use. I talked earlier of commitment. What I mean is that we are committed to the upholding of the freedom of speech, of assembly, of worship of every citizen of this vast and varied land. Our commitment to secular democracy is non-negotiable. There is nothing negative in our approach. I am not against a class or a section of society. I am for the Indian people. I know that they cannot be strong while poverty is deep and widespread. I know that they cannot be united while there are disparities and while all sections, including the minorities, do not have a full sense of security and a full sense of participation in the development of the country. Democracy is not worth much if it does not involve all the people.

I can assure this House and the country that our commitment to upholding in every possible way the fundamental rights of our citizens remains absolute. Even when we speak of imposing certain restriction on property rights, our intention is not to abolish property. Only where property rights are in conflict with public purpose, the public purpose must hold away. Our people understand this. In the last elections every possible attempt was made to scare the people and to mislead them into believing that all property would straight away be taken away. Those who indulge in such propaganda miscalculated and underestimated the wisdom of our people, a wisdom based not on formal education but on personal experience.

Some of us have joked and some have shown temper and some have sincerely pleaded their cause, but I would urge all hon. Members to approach the issues involved in our amendment with calm and sober reflection. These amendments have significant social and political import which we must try to understand in all seriousness.

The measures which we have taken and are taking are milestones in the progress of our democracy and are intimately related to the well-being and progress of millions of

* Responding to a Member's remark, "Kumaramangalam has property."

our people. They have come to be regarded by the people as marking a new stage in their struggle to build a more egalitarian, more humane, more just society. As their elected representatives, it is our duty to reflect their urges. It is in that spirit that I commend to you the acceptance of this Bill. By responding to the call of change and the call of the future which has strengthened the faith of our people in our democratic institutions and in the supremacy of this Parliament which is an expression of their will and also in the sanctity of our Constitution.

During this debate, there have been many quotations, most of them from the United States.

In the Oxford History of the American People, I came across an extract from the writings of William Channing, which I should like to share with you. I quote :

> There are reasons, in human affairs, of inward and outward revolution, when new depths seem to be broken up in the soul, when new wants are unfolded in multitudes, and a new and undefined good is thirsted for. There are periods when the principles of experience need to be modified, when hope and trust and instinct claim a share with prudence in the guidance of affairs.

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*†Mr. Chairman, though I am not required to speak, the Bill in question is so vital that I thought of saying a few words in this regard. It is a matter of great pleasure to note that leaving aside a few members, most of the hon. Members are with us on this issue, and there stand is very much appreciable too, because there is hardly any ambiguity as to what people actually want.

Members of one of the parties have demanded in the House that we should seek a fresh mandate on this issue and it has also been said that if we do not accept the referendum, it is because we are afraid of it. I do not want to mention this point, because it looks ridiculous. We had very clearly included this issue in our Manifesto.

There is hardly any of our Members elected to this House who did not touch this issue in his election-speeches. I for myself can say that out of the two points applauded mostly by the people, one pertained to this issue that once we returned to power, we would make such an amendment. Hence, it is not a step taken in haste and it is also not a matter of surprise.

One of the Members is stated to be resorting to 'Satyagraha' today. Those very people who used to make mockery of the 'Satyagraha' want to tell the people that they too have been to jails, no matter it was not for participating in the freedom struggle and they were even opposed to it.

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* Participating in the debate on the Constitution (Twenty-fourth Amendment) Bill, 1971 (as passed by the Lok Sabha) *R.S. Deb.*, 11 August, 1971, cc. 13–45.

† Original speech in Hindi.

†Sir, I was very much in the jail and police lock-up*. The police was present at my home and it would be better if you do not mention what you do not know ?

*** *** ***

If you can assert your point and give evidence in its favour, then you must do so before the people and this House**. I can assert that there is hardly any comparison between the sacrifices made by my family and the sacrifices made by any other family elsewhere in the world. It is better not to talk about the things which you are not aware of. I have not joined politics recently. I have been associated with it since I was two or three years old. I have mentioned in my speech yesterday that I have been in politics for 50 years.

*** *** ***

I am sorry. ***I am not taking credit for anything. If the hon. Member had patiently listened to the speeches which I have made in this House, not outside, he would have found that I have paid tributes time and again to all those who have sacrificed their all, their lives, their property or anything else....

*** *** ***

All of us know as to who brought forward this Bill in the other House. Ganga Sharan Babu and other members of P.S.P. etc. are present here. It was not our Party which brought forward this bill. This is the bill brought forward by a member belonging to the other party....

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I have noted that even in this House a number of parties are cooperating with us on this Bill. It is not only the Congress Party but other parties are also supporting it. If they say that the opposition parties are no longer the same as they used to be, it is acceptable to us but none in the world would acknowledge the same. There are a number of opposition parties which are cooperating with us on this Bill. Why are they supporting us ? This is not because they want to please an individual or praise a party.

We have been discussing this matter with other parties for a long time. What was going on in the mind of Shri Nath Pai, I know it very well, because this had been discussed during several sessions of Parliament for a long time. Whatever amendments he brought into it, were not because he wanted to do so but for the reason that we had not the required majority to get the Bill passed in both the Houses of Parliament....

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The way in which the leader of Jan Sangh put it here, it gives a feeling as if I were taking this right in my own hand. If I am required to give an assurance to this House,

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† Original speech in Hindi.

* Replying to Dr. Bhai Mahavir's remark : "Had you also been to jail that time ?"

** Replying to Dr. Bhai Mahavir's remark : "This is not your monopoly, others have also been to jail. Members of my family had also been to jail and they sacrificed a lot".

*** Replying to Dr. Bhai Mahavir's remark : "Sir, are there no other people who have sacrificed, who have suffered? Our parents also suffered. She is taking credit for what her father and others did. My father also suffered."

though I do not feel it necessary, however, even if it is required then I would like to say that this right shall not remain confined to me. Today I am here, tomorrow I may not be here and day after tomorrow no one knows where shall I be. In a democratic set up no one is sure about one's fate but the question is whether this right of the House and Parliament will ultimately exist or not. This is the question. So, by saying that people distort the fact what I mean is that they deviate from the main issues and put forth their views about irrelevant things.

Secondly our colleague Shri Ruthna Swamy of Swatantra Party has also delivered his speech. I am sorry that I was not present in the House at that time. He is our senior Member and has put the views of Swatantra Party very clearly. He has said that the rights of the human being such as right to live, right to freedom and right to have property must remain. We are not at all touching these rights. Hon. Members are aware that nothing new or extraordinary is going to happen at the moment. A situation was prevailing in Parliament some 20, 21 or 22 years ago, I do not remember that, whatever that may be, when no one was there to care for the rights of Parliament, we are restoring only those rights and we are not giving any new right. So far as the question of property is concerned I have also discussed it several times earlier and my Party is not opposed to it even the least, and there is no such intention in the Bill that we want to take away one's property or we are opposing the right to property. Such things have never happened. We only want to say that when the issue of one's property comes in the way of the interest of the country or the society, then the question arises as to whom to give top priority. This is also an issue. So, to propagate that the lands of all the small farmers, villagers or Harijans or the people who are in minority shall be taken and their property will be attached, is misinformation and merely a propaganda. Here, there is a question in the Constitution and it has always been haunting us, and this question has always been before the Government of India as to how to give equal opportunities to all. We should provide equal opportunities to the people and they should get them without any considerations of sex, caste, religion, region or language. We know that we are far from achieving this goal and I do not know whether we could do it or not but atleast we must put our best efforts to perform this task even though there are obstacles in the way.

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I am very happy to learn that Dr. Chandra Shekheran has delivered a good speech though I was not present in the House during his speech. I have come to know that he has declared his Party's support to this Bill.

As I have said that we do not want to confiscate anyone's property. But we want that justice should be done.

On a number of times I have said that I am not against any person, any group or any party. However their belief in something may be against our basic principles. Then we have to oppose such things vehemently in every manner in the House as well as outside the House. Otherwise the very purpose for which the freedom struggle was fought will be defeated and the base on which country can be strengthened will be weakened.

Our colleague, Mr. Tillai Villalan has also mentioned in his just concluded speech as to how true justice can be got. That is why I have always made submission in this House that we cannot stay aloof from the prevailing ideologies and the problems being faced by the world at large. We have to be in the mainstream. And if we isolate ourself from it then we can neither change the history nor affect the ideology of others.

The present Bill is not against the Constitution. On the contrary it will strengthen it and I also believe that it will further strengthen the faith of our people in our Constitution and democracy.... We desire that country should follow the path of democracy as laid down in the Constitution. And if any change is required, it should be made accordingly. A single person or a party is not demanding the right to change, we are giving this right to Parliament which is constituted with the vote of the people, that is, we are giving this right to the people and I think that none is above the people in any country.

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As I said, the apprehension has been created in the minds of minorities, whether they are Muslims, Christians or others, that they will be affected adversely or their problems will be complicated or their rights will be taken away, or abridged. I would like to assure them that there is no such thing in our minds. But if our colleagues from Jan Sangh do not take it ill, I would like to mention that the Congress since its existence has always stressed on programmes, intended to serve and protect the interests of minorities and to remove disparities between minority and majority. We do not want that anybody should have a feeling of being in minority or majority. We formulate all our programmes with this objective that there should be no discrimination and disparity between the high and the low. Everyone should discharge his duty as a citizen of India, and he should get all his rights. This is the object of this Bill.

Many good speeches have been delivered in the House. I heard some of these in the House itself and some others in my room. The speech made by our opposition Member, Shri Chengalvarayan has received much applause from all sides. Likewise, I heard my colleague Shri Pranab Mukherjee last night as the sitting of the House continued till late night. It seems that the persons of different opinions are having the same views in this regard, because it is an issue of such importance which will have far reaching impact on the future as well as the politics of the country.

I am glad to know that many Members of this House are legal experts who have gone through the legal aspects of this Bill.

But this is neither a legal issue nor I would term it as a statutory one. At present there is neither any dispute between Parliament and Judiciary nor there exists any controversy between Parliament and Constitution. All of them have got their own importance. As I stated in the beginning, had the Golak Nath case not come in the way, the introduction of this Bill would not have become necessary. As a result of the Golak Nath case a doubt about the factual position has arisen in the minds of the people and Members of Parliament.... Thus, it becomes imperative for us to bring a Bill before Parliament which can make it clear that this privilege as intended by our Constitution makers, lies in Parliament only.

- Yesterday, Kaul Sahib had stated here that there was no restriction on Parliament over the years and if there had been any restriction then it was a self-imposed one. It clearly stipulates whenever a danger is confronted then it is for us to see how we can get rid of it. Now, the question is what will be its impact on minorities and others, if this Bill is introduced.

If we look around us or turn the pages of history, then we will find that many Constitutions have been repealed. Many laws without being brought before Parliament, or without a second thought, have been rejected by the people.

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In India, our people still have full faith in Parliament and Constitution... Why democracy in India is becoming firm ? It is simply because our people have still faith in us, and they believe that their interests will be looked after and protected by Parliament. As I said earlier, once it appears to them that Parliament does not have this power then their faith in Parliament and Constitution may lose. As far as the question of referendum is concerned, I have already said about it.

Shri Chengalvarayan has uttered a very good sentence, "How can a power which is not enjoyed by the creator, be enjoyed by the creature." Unfortunately, I could not listen to Shri Bhupesh Gupta's speech but I have come to know that he is going to support the Bill. He has already been pressing why a Bill like this was not introduced earlier ?

...Our intention is not to weaken the Constitution and Parliament, but to strengthen them. I am sure that it will strengthen them. We have noticed that it has a very good impact on public. We are commited to maintain all the fundamental rights of our countrymen and nobody should have an iota of doubt about it.

Even today, one hon. Member has sent a *Shloka* to me. I am not reciting it here because most of the people must be knowing this *Shloka*. This is an old *Shloka* and it is written in our scriptures that whenever there is a conflict between our individual interest and the family, then the interest of the family is watched. If the dispute is between a family and the village, then the interest of the village is given priority. If the dispute is between a village and the nation then the interest of the nation is kept atop. I hope you will consider this Bill in this perspective. I also expect that the Members who have moved amendments to this Bill, shall withdraw their amendments, and the Bill will be passed not only by a majority but with a thumping majority.

The Constitution and Social Justice*

Mr. Speaker, we have all been waiting for this Bill to come before the House and, in fact, many hon. Members have complained that it has come very late and that we should have brought it much sooner. We have brought it as soon as we could. I am glad to see that there is such massive support for it here, as indeed I believe there is in the country as a whole.

The Law Minister has given an able exposition of the need for the Bill and also Government's thinking so that I need not enlarge on many of those points. I am sure that in winding up the debate he will also deal with the specific points raised, although when I listened very carefully both here and from my room I could not discern any new points at all.

Coming to the CPM. Their line was as expected. There is a basic difference in their way of thinking and functioning and ours. It sounds dramatic to talk of throwing out the Constitution lock, stock and barrel; it sounds heroic to talk of total revolution; but we all know that revolutions also settle down and every country has ultimately to find its own pattern.

And this is what we are trying to do in our country. But we are doing it peacefully and democratically. We listen also to the views of hon. Members of the CPM.

I like Shri Piloo Mody because he helps to enliven the proceedings in the House. But there are some subjects which have to be dealt with seriously.

*** *** ***

He has spoken lightly of the Directive Principles and Fundamental Rights and so on. Of course, the Swatantra Party's pet target has always been our public sector. I would only like to ask Shri Mody and his friends in and outside the House, as to who has mismanaged the textile mills, whether they be in Ahmedabad or in some other parts of the country. What is happening or has happened to the sugar mills in the UP and, for that matter, to the Ganesh Flour Mills, whose workers are squatting and starving outside my house.

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* While participating in the discussion on the Motion for consideration of the Constitution (Twenty-fifth Amendment) Bill, 1971, *L.S. Deb.*, 1 December, 1971, cc. 336-50.

It is true that there are some public sector units which are not functioning well for some there are good reasons for this and for some there are no reasons. I do not want to hide anything which is wrong because there is plenty that is right. But you want to highlight the wrcng and hide what is right or ignore it.

Anyway, it was also alleged by him* and Shri Anthony and, I think, one or two other Members that we have done nothing in all these 24 years to give effect to the Directive Principles. To belittle the progress that this country has made, whether it is education or in the expansion of opportunities for the people—and I would say, in this I include even those people for whom not enough has been done, such as our brethren of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and women and others—and also the panchayati movement, would be a libel on the whole nation.

The Directive Principles particularly ask us to avoid the concentration of wealth and the means of production and also to ensure the right to work and adequate means of livelihood. But did anyone, even those who drew up the Directive Principles, think that this could be done in such a short time ? Did anyone in any other country imagine that this could be done in a few years ? And to keep on harping on this or to keep on asking because we say that poverty must be removed, why it is not immediately removed ! It is not a bottle that you can pick up and throw away or a label that you can snatch off. Here are deep-rooted old problems in the country, which only the most energetic hard work and determined pursuance of ideals, can solve. This Bill is a part of that. It is not removing poverty; it is not removing the whole of inequality; it is not removing all the injustice that exists. It is a very, very small step that helps a little. But that does not mean that it is not necessary. It is because it is all these little steps that take us in the right direction. Of course, Mr. Piloo Mody will quarrel with me about the direction. But that is not my fault. To go in this direction, to solve these problems, to give these necessary amenities, necessary dignity to our people, is the objective of all our plans of development, and it is because we have come across certain impediments into them that we have been compelled to introduce these amendments.

It is ridiculous to talk about arbitrary use of power. When we realised that because of some judicial pronouncements, it was becoming impossible to implement effectively some of the Directive Principles, we put the whole thing before our people and their response is obvious to all. I do not think I need to speak about this in detail.

I come now to Mr. Frank Anthony's speech. His words would have been very eloquent, had they not been so suffused and permeated, if you will permit me to say, with bitterness and even malice. He made wild accusations, and untenable statements. This was the first time that I have heard the term "honest work" used to describe manipulations of share and property value. He spoke also of blood and sweat. Certainly, blood has been shed, and sweat has flowed. But was it Mr. Anthony's intention to imply that it was the property-owners who have shed the blood and sweat ? This is the impression I got when I was sitting here and listening to his speech. Certainly, if anybody's blood has been shed and

* Shri Piloo Mody.

sweat has flowed, but they are the blood and sweat of those on whose labour these property-owners have prospered.

Mr. Anthony claimed the monopoly of interpreting the Constitution on the plea that he was there. Fortunately, he was not the only one there when the Constitution was framed....

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Mr. Anthony, I claim no privilege of being a lady.* I do not consider myself a lady. I am a woman. I think, the days of "ladies and gentlemen" have long since passed in this world. We are here not because we are women or men but because we are a part of the human race, because we are involved in what is happening to the rest of the human race. We are determined to fight for their rights and their privileges.

Mr. Anthony also spoke about literacy. All of us, here and specially my collegues, are greatly concerned about this matter. Literacy has not progressed as well as it should have been. But may I with due respect to the many educationists who are sitting here, say that literacy is important but not that important. I do believe that in our country, in these 24 years, an understanding of many things has grown amongst our people. I may also say, with due respect to the people in other countries that in no way is this understanding inferior to that of the literate people of the advanced countries. I think, for us who sit in Parliament because of the support of the people to refer sheeringly, to those who are illiterate is hardly becoming. They are the people who have supported for this country. It is their blood and sweat that has helped this country to survive, whether in war or in peace....

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Much has been said about our keeping an eye on votes. I should like to know from you here and in confidence if you like, do you know of any political party in India or in the United Kingdom or in the United States or elsewhere in the world, which is not concerned with vote ? Do you know of any political individual who is not concerned with vote's ? All this sounds very well. But what does it mean when you get down to it ? When you try to find out what he is trying to say, it has no meaning.

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I would like to add that I doubt if there is any other party which has stood so firmly for measures which have been unpopular amongst the people. It is not that we have stood only for measures which are popular. We have stood for them and we have persuaded the people that ultimately it was the right thing, even though there were so many people trying to delude them into the belief that our moves were against religion or some interest or the other. We do not abandon measures because they happen to be unpopular.

In an election meeting a long time ago. I was told 'Please don't mention such and such matter because people here are very angry, and if you talk about it, we will lose the election'.

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* Replying to Shri Frank Anthony's observations, "You are a lady. I will not correct your incorrect statement. You are misquoting me".

My reply was that since, 'This was what the Opposition parties were saying if I did not reply to them, there would be no point in my talking.' So, they said, 'You need not speak. You can just sit on the platform.' So, I said, 'All right'. After two people had spoken, an old man got up and remarked, 'I have walked five miles to come here to hear my sister. When is she going to speak ?' I thought this was an opportunity and I got up and said, 'I want to speak, but people think that what I am going to say will annoy you. So, they do not want me to speak. It is upto you. Shall I speak ?' 'Naturally', he said. Then I explained our proposal. He said, the question has never been explained to us before. The Opposition Parties are saying the opposite. So, it is not that we shun moves which are unpopular and which may lose us votes. Many things have lost us votes but we have not left those programmes for that reason...(*Interruption*) I do not want to belittle the importance of the vote, because we all know that it is the symbol of the wishes of the people.

*** *** ***

Parliament is a repository of the hopes and wishes of the people. It is the fountainhead of change and of justice. If Parliament is rendered unable to bring about change or to ensure social justice, then change will bypass Parliament. I have full respect for the Judiciary but I must say that it is Parliament which is the expression and guardian of the democratic will.

Earlier also, amendments to the Constitution became necessary because the courts have made it difficult for Parliament to implement programmes of social justice. The present set of amendments have also become necessary for the same reason.

Earlier I spoke about other people who were there at the time of the making of the Constitution and at that time this is what my father said about compensation—in the Constituent Assembly while the Constitution was still being drafted. I quote :

> Eminent lawyers have told us that on a proper construction of this clause, normally speaking, the judiciary should not and does not come in. Parliament fixes either the compensation itself or the Principles governing that compensation and they should not be challenged except for one reason, where it is thought that there has been a gross abuse of the law, where in fact there has been a fraud on the Constitution. Naturally, the judiciary comes in to see if there has been a fraud on the Constitution or not. But normally speaking, one presumes that any Parliament representing the entire community of the nation will certainly not commit a fraud on its own Constitution and will be very much concerned with doing justice to the individual as well as the community.

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All citizens are equal before the law. But can we honestly say that our law, as it has developed and as it has been interpreted, is giving that equality in actual practice ?

Many judgements have favoured the propertied classes, equating compensation with market value.

Shri Samar Guha was very eloquent on what the hon. Law Minister said about the judiciary. I am sure the Law Minister did not in any way mean to say anything against the

judiciary. He has, I think, full respect for the judiciary, and I may say, he has fuller respect for the judiciary....

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There is no decision in the world which is not political.* If the hon. Member is saying that any speech which he has made here is not political, I am very sorry that I do not believe it....

*** *** ***

I would say that the remarks which hon. Member is making on this point are equally political**. They are equally with an eye on some section or another which he may think will want that point of view to be put forward.

I must point out that he made a very uncharitable statement about which I would like to protest very strongly, Mr. Speaker. If I have heard him correctly, he said something about Members of my party working for outside interests. Obviously he is judging people by his own standards, this does not happen in my party.

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I would not have said this if he*** had not made any uncharitable remark about our party. There is a French proverb which says—I shall not say it in French, translated into English it says—that 'This animal is wicked, because he defends himself when he is beaten'.

Sir, much has been said about market value. Now, what is market value ? And how does it appreciate ? The price of property goes up because of the investments made by society, because we build the land, we build the roads and we build industry. It is unacceptable to us that a few should skim the cream of social investments, defrauding society as a whole.

I must say, I have, not much respect for market value or the values of the market-place for that matter. The whole idea of private profit at the cost of the common man is repugnant to me, to my party, and I think, to the nation. It is astonishing how those who sneer at socialism being a foreign concept or import have had no hesitation whatsoever in embracing capitalism with such great ardour.

I think it was Shri Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer, the great jurist, who said :

> Our ancients never regarded the institution of property as an end in itself. Capitalism as it is practised in the West came in the wake of the Industrial Revolution and is alien to the root ideas of our civilisation.

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* Replying to Shri Samar Guha who said, "He said political decision on political issues".

** Shri Samar Guha.

*** Shri Samar Guha.

I would like to reiterate that our amendments does not represent a departure from the basic framework of our Constitution. It is an effort to safeguard the intent of the Constitution. The Constitution-framers did not envisage any unregulated right to private property nor did they want property rights to come in the way of socio-economic progress.

Shri Vajpayee has returned to the House, not returned as a member, but since yesterday or the day before with a new-found enthusiasm for socialism. I think that on deeper thought he was trying to be right. I welcome this.

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If he accepts our policies *in toto*, if he accepts our methods, our principles, our aims, certainly he is welcome*. I have no quarrel with Shri Vajpayee. I quarrel with his ideas. I have said that many times before. The only point I want to make is that if he wants to accept socialism, he will also have to reconsider many of his other ideas.

Shri Shyamnandan Babu also spoke of being a socialist. But he says he is a different kind of socialist.

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But I am afraid that lately he has been obsessed with rather trivial matters and not with basic matters which concern the country and the people.

I think I have dealt with the point made by Shri Krishna Menon. But I would like to repeat it in case there is any misgiving. He expressed concern that we were undermining people's confidence in the judiciary. I would like to emphasise that we do not want to weaken the judiciary. What we are saying is only this : let the judiciary not try to take over the powers of Parliament. I entirely agree with him that an impartial judiciary is indispensable to the rule of law.

Now, the other matter that has been worrying many members here is about minorities. I have no hesitation in saying with all the emphasis at my command that there is absolutely no threat to the minorities. Our Constitution has specific provisions giving the fullest protection to the minorities and to their educational and religious institutions. None of this is being touched or changed. I would like to say this since it is widely being rumoured around Parliament that some people may exploit this and accuse the Government or the Congress, of giving more to the minorities than to the majority. This is not new propaganda. We have heard it before.

We have faced it during elections. I sincerely hope that the public of India will see things in there true light. We are certainly not against the majority. How can we be ? Because, much as we welcome the support of the minorities, it is only the support of the majority that has brought us here—Shri Vajpayee may note. Nobody could have come to this Parliament with the support merely of the minorities. So when he says that we have

* Replying to Shri Piloo Mody's remark : "Why don't you welcome him ?"

one eye on the minorities, let me assure him that we can never do this at the cost of the majority community. But I do believe that in every country the majority has a responsibility. The bigger man has a responsibility towards the smaller man. We certainly hope that the day will come, and that too very soon, when we do not need to have these safeguards, when everybody can feel that he can get his just right and so on. But that day has not come yet. Therefore, we have to have safeguards for the minorities. Not only that, we have also special programmes for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. With all that, we have not yet been able to bring them to a place where they can compete fully with the others.

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I think the greatest protection to the rights of the majority as well as the rights of the minorities is this Parliament and the people as a whole.

May I now turn to the five amendments proposed by the Law Minister, amendments Nos. 11, 12, 13, 36 and 57 ? Regarding amendment No. 11, its objective was clear, to allay the apprehensions of the minorities that the amendment of Art. 31 would affect their rights under Art. 30.

The Amendment was intended to make it clear that whatever rights the minorities already possessed under article 30 would not be affected by the amendment of article 31. We feel that it is important to reassure the minorities regarding this matter. But we have now decided not to move amendment No. 11 but to substitute it with another amendment No. 57, which, we feel, expresses more clearly the intention of Government. The Law Minister will explain this in detail.

So far as amendment Nos. 12, 13 and 36 are concerned, the Government has followed with interest the various expressions of opinion of different Members during the debate. There appears to be a certain apprehension that Government is going back on its previous position. Amendment No. 12 is an attempt to clarify the scope of the jurisdiction of the court, but in view of the expressions of opinion made by different Members that the original draft is more satisfactory, Government have decided not to have amendment No. 12.

So far as amendment Nos. 13 and 36 are concerned, which introduce the need for a special majority for passing laws under article 31C, again there has been some apprehension that this could make it difficult to enact legislation which is directed at implementing the directive principles under article 31B and C. We have given our most anxious consideration to this matter, and have come to the conclusion that there is a certain basis for these apprehensions and that in fact the progress of legislation effectuating the principles referred to in article 31B and C might be retarded. We have, therefore, decided not to move these amendments.

But the crux of the matter is very simple for whom are our Constitution and our laws meant—are they meant for the few privileged or for the many, poor and weak ? The fundamental rights and the directive principles are intended to benefit the poor and the weak, whether they are in the majority or in the minority. It would be a travesty of the

Constitution if the fundamental rights afford protection to the privileged against the true interests of the poor.

I do not think there is any conflict between fundamental rights and the directive principles. They are supplementary and complementary. If you are afraid that our people are going to lose their faith in the fundamental values of the Constitution, I can only allay your fears by asking you to go and talk to the people. If Parliament misuses its power, I am sure that our people will not tolerate that Parliament for long. In any case, as my colleagues have already explained, any colourable use of the legislative power will always be open to judicial scrutiny.

Sir, I quoted something from my father, but the same thing has been said in different words by Abraham Lincoln, with which I would like to end :

"Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people ? Is there any equal I hope in the world ?"

Sir, I commend these amendments to the House.

Abolition of Privy Purses*

Mr. Speaker Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India, be taken into consideration."

I do not think that any eleborate speech is expected of me. The principle underlying the Bill has been argued here before and accepted with overwhelming majority. It was fifteen months ago that I had moved a Bill to abolish the purses and privileges and as I have said just now, it won more than two-thirds vote in the Lok Sabha and in the Rajya Sabha it failed to secure the required special majority by a fraction of a vote. But that was a more technical failure. The will of the people was not in doubt.

We, therefore, gave effect to it by Presidential Order on September 6th. This was taken to the Supreme Court which set aside the Presidential Order on December 15th. On that very day, I told the House that the Government stood committed to the abolition of privy purses and privileges through appropriate constitutional means.

This decision was reiterated in our election manifesto and it secured the overwhelming endorsement of the people of the country. So, we have come before the House in fulfilment of a pledge.

Some changes have been made in the Bill as presented to the House this time, keeping in view the observations of the Supreme Court.

This is the third batch of Bills to amend the Constitution. The purpose of all these Bills, as the House knows, is to narrow the disparities in our society. Since Freedom, we have been setting right the old disparities and social injustices one by one, and this is yet another step towards the creation of an egalitarian society.

The House is aware that there is a great deal of feeling in the country against inherited special status, against privileges unrelated to function or responsibility, against exemptions and facilities enjoyed without adequate reason. We have adopted a series of measures to remove such vested interests. Absentee landlords have been eliminated. The economic power of the merchant princes is being checked. It is but fair that the feudal princes also be asked to shed their special privileges. I hope that the princes will view this in historical perspective. A levelling process is a work in our society, a process which is abolishing

* While moving the Constitution (Twenty-sixth Amendment) Bill, 1971 for consideration in Lok Sabha, *L.S. Deb.*, 2 December, 1971, cc. 138-41.

divisions and class distinctions. Certain forces are irreversible and inexorable. We can choose to ignore them and resist them and be swept aside, or we can recognise their reality and attempt to give some direction to them.

I do admit that a large number of princes have acted with foresight and have adjusted themselves to changes, and I should like also to acknowledge the patriotic spirit with which they acted to facilitate the political integration of the country after independence. Later there were earnest attempts to persuade them voluntarily to abrogate their privileges. The response from some was prompt and encouraging; others were not equally responsive. They failed to appreciate the fact that when a moment is not seized, it will not come again. I am not trying to apportion blame. I would have been happy if the problem could have been solved through discussion. We did have some talks, but there seemed to be such a gap between our thinking and theirs that one could not see any common meeting ground, and the solution could not be indefinitely postponed.

I should like to say again, what I have said earlier, that there is no personal animus against any individual prince or even against the princely order as such. Our quarrel, if one can call it a quarrel, is against a system that no longer has relevance in our society, or, for that matter, in any society.

A great community of equals is being created in our country, and I would invite the princes and princesses to join this community unencumbered by a sense of past authority.

Yesterday, quite by chance, we had a little interlude about ladies and gentlemen and men and women.

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There was a time when superiority could be measured only by rank or by wealth. But today the scope to show one's worth is very much vaster, in fact I would say, practically unlimited. I feel that by taking away the privy purses and privileges, which I do not think add to the worth of a person in any way, we might be depriving the princes of some pomp and luxury, but at the same time we are giving them the opportunity of being men.

This Bill represents the spirit of history. I commend it to the House and request my hon. colleague, the Law Minister, to deal further with it in the remaining stages.

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*Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move—

"That the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Sir, so much has been said on this subject and so much important business is there before the House that I do not want to say anything at all. All our views are known to the

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* While moving the Bill in Rajya Sabha, *R.S. Deb.*, 9 December, 1971, cc. 7-10.

House and the nation. And this was one of the items which we had put before the electorate and on which I think the response of the people has been very clear. Since then there is a new situation in the country. In Bangladesh and along our western borders and in some places beyond the western borders, our valiant forces are today fighting to defend the integrity of India and the values for which India stands.

War in my view is an unmitigated evil, yet it does generate a spirit of comradeship. This is because neither bullets nor bombs nor the mud of the battle-field distinguishes between one man and the other, between the rank of a person and the wealth of a person or the birth of a person. Today our viliant forces are fighting as equals and without distinction of religion, class or status. At least one within them to my knowledge is a 'prince' and others are people of many other categories.

The days are gone when birth was the chief road to distinction. All over the world today, distinction comes from achievement, and I believe that the highest privilege to which one can aspire in our country should be the privilege of being an Indian, a free Indian, a democratic Indian, not higher or lower than any other Indian, and this is the type of society which we are trying to establish. We have not yet succeeded, but this is what we are trying to do step by step. I have often heard, even yesterday when the Constitution (Twenty-fifth Amendment) Bill was before this House, people saying that so many things have not been done. We too are poignantly aware that many things have not been done. Many inequalities and injustices do exist. But at least those of which that can be removed little by little, step by step, we are trying to remove. There is no use wailing on the evils of the past society because in olden times all societies were marked by hierarchy and so was ours. We had an added disadvantage of caste which introduced further divisions but the march of history has seen the abolition of the feudal order. In other countries, the old order—the *ancient regime*, as it was called in Europe—was abolished with much violence. Here in India we won our freedom through non-violence and our social revolution is also being achieved non-violently—whether it is the abolition of untouchability or of absentee landlordism or the princely order, all these things are being done democratically, peacefully and with the consent of the people. This should be a matter of satisfaction to us all.

As I have said on numerous occasions, we do stand for change in society. We think the change could be more rapid, more widespread than it is at the moment, but at the same time we believe that change should be peaceful. We also believe that if the forces of change are obstrocted, you do not stop change, you merely obstruct the peaceful and orderly transition. So our attempt at bringing about social change–and this includes the abolition of privileges being enjoyed by the princes—should not be regarded by them or by anybody else as an indictment of the princes as individuals or as a group. The princes acted with practical good sense when the country was politically integrated. Even in this matter which concerns them so intimately, some have displayed the proper understanding of the issues involved. They have recognised that the times have changed and they have seen the wisdom of trying to meet the change half way. It is my belief that to allow such an anachronism to continue would be as much an obstruction to them as to our society as a whole. The Princes are Indians as the rest of us are. They are citizens as the rest of us are and we owe a duty to them as they owe a duty to our society and to the country. So at this moment of danger

and difficulty of the country, let us not dwell on the past but look to the great and pressing needs of the present and to the future which beackons us and which we have to build together. I commend this Bill to the House. I invite the Princes to join the elite of the modern age, the elite which earns respect by its talent, energy and contribution to human progress, all of which can be done only when we work together as equals without regarding anybody as of special status.

I request the House to pass this Bill. The Law Minister will deal with it further in the remaining stages.

Role of the Opposition in Parliament*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, for several days tempers have run high. It is necessary for us all to see the entire matter in a calmer frame of mind and in the proper perspective. That will be my endeavour in rising to speak.

The House has spent many hours debating the issue of making public the C.B.I. report and in the process, a situation has arisen which causes us the gravest concern and is bound to have wide repercussions. It is therefore a matter of sorrow that a senior Member of Parliament who was known to feel strongly about upholding the proprieties and respect for the due processes of law, should decide to use coercive methods to prevent the functioning of the House. Obstructionist methods do not become less dangerous by using evocative terms like 'Satyagraha'. While speaking of democracy, some people are building up an atmosphere of confrontation perhaps because they are basically against fully representative democracy and wish to undermine the people's faith in parliamentary institutions. The misguided resort to satyagraha plays into their hands. Satyagraha was used as a political weapon when no other way was open to us to register the people's will. But our political system affords the fullest scope for the people's will to assert itself. The persistence with which some Members are obstructing the work of the House does not augur well for our parliamentary democracy. In all seriousness, I urge hon. Members not to bring about a deadlock. As Members of this august House, it is our duty to see that no group is allowed to subvert the parliamentary process. We respect the role of the Opposition; it is an essential role. The Opposition also must recognise that the work of the country should not be thwarted. Important and urgent legislative business especially the legislation connected with the drive against smugglers and other vital economic issues which are exercising the minds of the people and have a direct bearing on their well-being, are getting inordinately delayed.

My colleagues have already given our reasons for not placing the C.B.I. report on the Table of the House. However, suspicion is sought to be created in the public mind and I should like to clarify this matter. We have nothing to hide nor are we objecting to the placing of the report on merely technical grounds. The C.B.I. is an investigating authority. It would run counter to the accepted principles of our judicial process to make public an investigating document at a time when the trial against the accused is imminent. Under the Code of Criminal Procedure, the documents which an investigating officer is required to maintain,

* Speaking during the discussion regarding the demand to make public the CBI Report about the Licences Case, *R.S. Deb.*, 9 December, 1974, cc. 125–27.

are case diaries which contain day-to-day records of the investigations conducted by the investigating officer. As soon as the investigation is complete the investigating officer, under Section 173 Cr. P.C. has to submit a charge sheet if any persons have to be tried for any offence, or a final report in the prescribed form if the case has to be closed for want of evidence, to the Magistrate having jurisdiction.

No other report is prescribed under the Cr. P.C. In the C.B.I., standing instructions lay down that the investigating officer should prepare a detailed report giving a summary of the oral and documentary evidence which has come on record during investigation, and a discussion of this evidence. This report contains only a summary of the statements of witnesses and references to documents relied upon by the prosecution. Also, statements recorded during investigation are inadmissible in evidence and cannot be used except for the limited purpose of contradicting a witness as laid down in section 162 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. What is treated as evidence are the statements which witnesses actvally make in court and the documents which are produced and proved during the court trial....

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Therefore, if this report were placed on the Table of the House, the ensuing debate would virtually amount to a concurrent trial which will not only defeat the ends of justice, by prejudicing the trial in court but may also result in a conflict between the courts and Parliament. I am sure this is not the intention of hon. Members....

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For these reasons, such a report has never been placed on the Table of the House in the long history of the C.B.I. which has established a reputation both for integrity and impartiality.

Now when a copy of the charge-sheet, which is a fairly detailed document, has been made available, why should so much time be taken up merely in demanding a copy of the report ? Does this not indicate that the real intention behind the demand is not a proper discussion of the case but rather its exploitation for a political purpose ?

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It is also unfortunate that because of some small supposed political gain, some hon. Members of the Opposition are trying to set a new precedent which might make the functioning of the C.B.I. difficult in future.

I have given reasons why the report cannot be laid on the Table of the House. But in view of the entirely unjustified propaganda being carried on inside the House and outside, and to accommodate the sentiments of the Opposition, while maintaining legal rectitude, Government is willing to accept the suggestion that the leaders of the Opposition might see, in confidence and under oath of secrecy, the C.B.I. report...statements made by witnesses and documents seized during the investigation, the report of the handwriting expert and even the case diaries which are not even shown to the accused. Our hesitation to do so was merely to prevent situations in the future which would inhibit people from

giving information. I sincerely hope that this eminently fair and practical suggestion will be acceptable to them also. If the Opposition rejects this, it will be patent that Government has nothing to hide but that many of the Opposition parties are not at all interested in truth or justice but in pursuing narrow partisan ends.

In this situation, we must all conduct ourselves in the fullest consciousness of our high responsibility. The first element of this responsibility is to ensure that Parliament functions. The cause of democracy cannot be served by bringing Parliament to a standstill. I beseech you not to use any method which will undermine the very basis of the highest democratic institution in our country, namely, Parliament. Let it not be said that the achievement of generations was wrecked in a moment of anger.

Parliament's Right to Amend the Constitution*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise with a sense of dedication for I am keenly conscious of the high significance of what we are doing here in this House. 16 months ago, I spoke of the need to restore the health of our democracy. The Bill now before the House may not be perfect and many Members have pointed out its imperfections. But it is, I earnestly believe, a vital step in curing our political system of some of the ills to which it is subject. I think, it will add to the country's strength and capacity to fulfil our national objectives and to realise few more of the hopes of our people. But I must confess to disappointment at the attitude of a few Opposition parties. They demand full discussion of the amendment but they keep away from Parliament, the supreme forum of such a discussion. This kind of escaping responsibility is difficult to appreciate except, as we have all noticed, that irresponsibility has become a habit with some people. To non-cooperate with Parliament is to non-cooperate with the people. My advice to the un-reconciled Opposition parties would be to give up their negative opposition and return to the path of reason and responsibility. Of course, this negative Opposition is not born out of the Emergency, as some hon. Members opposite have hinted. It started long before Emergency; and in fact, it was one of the causes for the Emergency.

Amongst those of the Opposition who did speak, some seemed to be groping to find something to criticize. That is why their arguments were rather contrived. All that this section of the Opposition is saying to-day they have been repeating throughout this difficult period, during and since the last elections. And no matter how many more discussions we have, I doubt whether they are going to come up with any new argument.

Some hon. Members asked why we have waited so long to bring in these amendments. The hon. House is aware–and so are the people of India–that we have amended the Constitution earlier. We have gone ahead with our programmes in spite of tremendous odds and unforeseen difficulties, external as well as internal. It was the abuse of democracy by some of the Opposition, the obstruction in the way of our legitimate functioning which necessitated further consideration and action. And enough evidence of this attitude and of the actions of the Opposition is available in print and in the memories of all of us present here and a large part of the world, not just of this country.

Were the actions of the Opposition in Gujarat leading to the dissolution of the Assembly democratic? Therefore it ill behoves any one belonging to the Opposition and coming from

* Participating in the discussion on the Motion for the consideration of the Constitution (Forty-fourth Amendment) Bill, 1976, *L.S. Deb.*, 27 October 1976, cc.135-47.

that State to lecture us on democracy. The Gujarat agitation was the beginning of the threat to the very survival of our democratic system.

Then some people have spoken of lack of political will. I think that our actions–I am not speaking our words but of our actions–have demonstrated that there has been no lack of political will. In fact it was the will and the determination which aroused such anger and evoked the campaign of criticism and calumny against our party and against me, personally. Those who are now speaking about freedom of speech did not seem to be concerned with the suppression af the voices of the millions of the poor. Those who are expressing such anguished concern for democracy–how many of them collected signatures against the politics of falsehood and hate, against violence, arson and murder? And if they have, I think it must be in a very obscure corner because our attention was not drawn to it.

Then, there are those whom Professor Mukherjee rightly called, 'political mercenaries' those who have no foot-hold in India but are hailed abroad as leaders. As for those who haunt foreign embassies and high commissions, it is not a question of "a handful of silver", but of bottles of whisky, trips abroad or scholarships for their children. Any one who is proud of India's heritage, proud of the greatness of the Indian people cannot but feel deep shame at the antics of these so-called 'friends of democracy'.

The R.S.S. and Ananda Marg, apart from their underground activities which still persist here, have found it more profitable financially and otherwise, to establish branches in several foreign countries. What has been the role of these two groups, what has been their commitment to democracy all these years? Has any Member of the Opposition given thought to this aspect?

I am sorry that even the attitude of my hon. friend sitting opposite was somewhat ambiguous. The hon. Member spoke of not mixing minor items such as quorums with such a serious amendment. He charged us with diverting attention from the main clauses. Others also criticized the part of the Executive and various other matters. Justice Subha Rao's trying for Presidentship was a blatant indication, not only of the political bias of some of the judiciary, but of their intention to be involved in and to interfere in politics. The question was not of a particular individual, it was symptomatic of the basic struggle, the spearhead of the entire movement against everything that the Congress party as a representative of the freedom struggle, had advocated and struggled for, the programmes and ideas on which not just one but all our elections were fought and won.

Many have pressed for the deletion of the property clause. Today our thrust is not merely on directions or intentions, but on actual action. Hon. Members will remember a time when the Congress party passed a resolution regarding co-operative farming. There was nothing in it about people having to give up their land, there was nothing in it about collective farming, yet such a tremendous campaign of propaganda was launched that even that very moderate programme could not get off the ground. You all know how easy it is to spread misunderstanding, specially amongst those who have little property. Perhaps it is those who have more, who spread misunderstanding but whatever it is, the result is that even

the man who has a small piece of property gets upset that his little bit will be touched. Hence our caution not to be pushed into any position which would make it more difficult to implement our programmes. The 20-Point Programme and the 5-Point Programme are not individual programmes; they are national programmes and they are essential for our progress. They are essential to all the other programmes which we want to implement.

As regards family planning, the Health Minister and I have made repeated and clear statements of the policy of the Government of India. We do not approve of compulsion. But we do believe that programmes of sterilization and the adoption of all other known effective measures for the control of population are important and most urgent. It is our view and that of many non-Government people who have travelled around the country, that there is now an awareness and acceptance of these programmes. But, and it is a big "but", certain parties, groups and individuals have been raising a hue and cry, creating misunderstanding and an atmosphere of fear. As we all know, fear leads to irrational action. Therefore, when a situation of confrontation is deliberately created, there are tragic consequences. Some deaths have taken place due to firing, though the figure given by some hon. Members is greatly exaggerated. On the other hand, organized groups have also killed policemen and other citizens, even those who were not on a family planning mission. Where there is harassment, it should certainly be dealt with. But it will be easier to do so if people are not incited and encouraged to take the law in their hands, and also if political parties and outside interests will not try to take political advantage of the situation.

Another party questioned whether any State Government had defied the Centre. I do not know whether I would use that particular word, but we do have examples of State Governments creating difficulties with regard to national property and production. By the way, the Railway Police are also under State jurisdiction. So the alleged confrontation was not between the Centre and Kerala, nor was it anything but a friendly wrangle. The Goa referendum was an entirely different issue and has no relevance to the recent situation.

Many hon. Members have spoken about the purposes of Government and the problems of nation-building, from deep knowledge. Shri, Gokhale and others quoted Jawaharlal Nehru's admonition to the Constituent Assembly not to tie down future generations. Jawaharlal Nehru knew the country had to, and would, change speedily, he himself planted and nurtured the seeds of change. As the House knows, the first amendment to the Constitution came within months of the adoption of the documents. Indeed, many will recall that even as the Constituent Assembly was in session, so many changes were occurring, for example, the integration of the States, when many clauses were reopened and revised. So, revision and adjustment in changing conditions are part and parcel of our Constitution. Those who want to fix it in a rigid and unalterable frame do not know the spirit of our Constitution and are entirely out of tune with the spirit of new India.

Various theories, as to what constitutes the core of our Constitution, have been put forward. Some say Fundamental Rights, others, the Directive Principles Chapter. Yet others think it is judicial review. A doctrine of constitutional supremacy has been propounded. The true supremacy is that of the people. While the Constitution is a very important document, it is but an instrument to serve the people. The Constitution exists for the people. People should certainly respect it, but they cannot be sacrified for it.

A wholly unjustified charge is that the amendments are intended to serve the Congress. The Congress has always thought of the country, not of itself. The Congress took the lead in drafting the Constitution, as it took the lead in the fight for freedom. Shri Shiva Rao, a recognised authority on the Constitution, has written:

> "The Congress was labouring for freedom and unity, not for a party or a section but for the country as a whole." (B. Shiva Rao, The Framing of India's Constitution', Vol. 1, Page 121)."

The same considerations guide us today: freedom and unity and the good of the country as a whole, not the gain of any particular section. The Congress invited many non-Congressmen to participate in the task of Constitution–making. When the work was over, a non-Congressman, Dr. Ambedkar did not hesitate to concede:

> "The possibility of chaos (in drafting and debate) was reduced to nil by the evistence of the Congress Party inside the Assembly which brought into its proceedings, a sense of order and discipline. It is because of the discipline of the Congress that the Drafting Committee was able to pilot the Constitution in the Assembly with the sure knowledge as to the fate of each article and each amendment". (Ibid p. 838)

The Congress continues to be impelled by the same discipline, the same desire, to ensure the national good.

A Constitution must give order and stability, it must ensure that the organs of Government are responsible to the people and subject to their will. It prescribes restraints on all and that is the essence of the rule of law. There can be stability and responsibility and law only if the legislature, the executive and the judiciary respond to the changing needs and aspirations of our people.

This is what the present Bill does: it is responsive to the aspirations of the people and reflects the realities of the present time and the future. It is not hastily conceived, it is drawn up with care and deliberation. Many of the changes were, in fact, suggested by the Committee set up by Jawaharlal Nehru in 1954. So in a sense, the discussion has been going on for twenty whole years. This certainly cannot be called rushing or stampeding!

We are assailed on the ground that we want to establish executive dominance. We have not changed anything. What was implicit has now been made clear. An understanding of the parliamentary system shows that in our system the executive is a parliamentary executive. All Ministers are Members of Parliament and they are daily accountable to Parliament.

Some people quote British practice and precedent day in and day out and challenge the right of our Parliament to amend the Constitution through processes set forth in the Constitution itself. They very conveniently forget what Shri B.N. Rau pointed out, that the British Constitution can be altered but ordinary law. We have always maintained that Parliament has an unfettered, unqualified and unabridgeable right to amend the Constitution. We do not accept the dogma of the basic structure. Sardar Swarn Singh remarked that some

Judges have imported the phrase "basic structure". I would not say they have imported it since it does not exist in any other Constitution, they have invented it. We do not think that only a Constituent Assembly can amend the Constitution. Such ideas were put forth even at the time of the drafting of the Constitution but were rejected. Indeed, Dr. Ambedkar cogently explained that the Constituent Assembly which drafted the Constitution had been elected on a limited franchise whereas the Parliament of India under the Constitution would be elected on countrywide adult franchise, and surely such Parliament could not be said to have lesser power!

Some criticisms are due to misapprehension. Others are deliberately intended to sow mischief. I can say clearly and unambiguously that personal rights are not curtailed; judicial power to protect personal rights has not been abolished or curtailed. The President has not been invested with the power to amend the Constitution. As the Law Minister explained the day before yesterday, the removal of difficulties clause is a routine safeguard. The chapter on duties has been introduced not to smother rights but to establish a democratic balance. Our Constitution was notable for highlighting Directive Principles along with Fundamental Rights. Neither can flower bear fruit without the performance of duties. The asymmetry of one-sided stress on rights will be rectified.

I should like to assure my friend behind that there is no intention that in the preservation of wild life, tribal life should suffer. On the contrary, if forests are better looked after and wild life is preserved, there would be far greater opportunities for employment as well as a better ecological balance in the whole area which would lead to an improvement in the life of the tribal. So far, the feeling of responsibility towards nature was absent all over the world. It was not absent in our own ancient books; but came about because we adopted the western view point. Now the time has come once more for us to go back to the sources of strength of the human race and to try to preserve and revitalise them.

In my own view, this bringing in of duties should have been done when the Constitution was drawn up. Other countries have realised the importance of not permitting liberties to be turned into licence. For example, the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany contains a provision to prevent the misuse of the constitutional freedoms. Article 18 reads as follows :

> "Whoever abuses the freedom of expression of opinion, in particular the freedom of the press, the freedom of teaching, the freedom of assembly the freedom of association, the secrecy of mail, post and telecommunications, property, or the right of asylum in order to attack the free democratic basic order, shall forfeit these basic rights."

I think that some other constitutions also have some such provision even if not so clearly stated.

We are accused that the clause on anti-national activities is meant to liquidate opposition parties. Had the Congress wanted to, it could have done so in 1947; it could have been done so at any later date. But nowhere has any party been so tolerant of the Opposition. We have not regarded and we do not now regard, anti-Congress or even anti-Government activity as anti-national. The question has been raised, what is anti-national. I don't think

the answer is very complicated. The reaching of the dismemberment of India is anti-national. Inciting communal or provincial hatred and violence is anti-national. Indulging in the destruction of national installations is anti-national. We are not against legitimate trade union activities. And in fact, the large majority of workers, industrial workers are with us. But trade union activity should not be used by a few as a cover for violence, desruption and sabotage.

Something was also said by some Members about misuse of such clauses by a possible future non-benign government. One person called it a non–benign government; another called it an evil government. Does anyone doubt that if such a Government were to come to power would it not follow its own path? Do you seriously think that it would be concerned with the niceties of the Constitution? This is the same argument that Western people used when we had our peaceful nuclear experiment and also on other occasions. Those people who want to do something, those who are bent in a particular direction, they are going to go in that direction. They are not waiting for Congress to open door for them. They will break open the doors if they feel that would help them.

Indeed they have tried to do so already. What for was all the agitation before Emergency? What was it except to throw aside the Constitution, to throw aside the base of our democracy? What was it when an hon. Member of this House, an hon. Member of the Opposition, said, "We will take politics to the streets"? What was it? Was it we who made such a declaration? Therefore, the hon. Members who spoke against the amendments, sounded quite plausible in speaking of democracy but their arguments are not so plausible when we know what had gone on before, not only on the streets of our cities but right here in this House when people wanted to squat on the ground and indeed did so. I do not think that was any part of parliamentary procedure, parliamentary decorum or of democracy as our founding fathers envisaged it.

Now, I spoke of parties not bothering about the niceties of the Constitution. We know that in most developing countries, perhaps in all developing countries, they have not been able to keep the sort of open society which we have. I am not blaming them because it is for each country to decide what sort of system they should have and how they can solve their problems. What I am saying is, that the difference between conditions in affluent Western countries and countries which are still struggling to consolidate their freedom and build their very foundations, cannot be brushed aside because of any text-book definition.

The founding fathers of our Constitution and of our country had intended Indian society to be secular and socialist. These are not new definitions. They have guided our laws all these years. All we are doing now is to incorporate them in the Constitution itself for they rightly deserve to be mentioned there. The specific mention of this fact in the Preamble will provide the frame of reference to all, to our people, to the Government, to the judiciary and to the world.

The purpose of the Bill is to remedy the anomalies that have been long noticed and to overcome the obstacles put by economic and political vested interests. The amendments we have brought in are more in the nature of renovation. We are not building a new house.

But there are people who, unfortunately, do not wish to pull their weight in the proper management of our country. When the initial drafting of the Constitution was completed in 1949, Dr. Rajendra Prasad remarked :

> "Our Constitution so far has evoked many controversies and raised many questions which had deep difference. But we have somehow or other managed to get over them all."

This modest phrase represents the sincerity and capacity for compromise which marked the outlook of our founding fathers. That is the spirit we must all strive to emulate, whether we belong to Congress or to other parties.

I agree with my hon. friend who said that he did not care if he were elected or not. Individuals may not matter. In fact, I do not matter. But the future and independence of our country do matter. We cannot sacrifice them. We cannot allow them to be threatened or be damaged in any way by outside pressure merely because of some people's view of what should be done and, specially, when those are the people who are not concerned with the same values just a year or so ago.

The Constitution of 1949 embodied the spirit of the peaceful revolution of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. A peaceful, revolution is a continuing revolution. This Bill is not achieving all our aims, but it will carry the Indian revolution forward, making our people freer and endowing them, with greater power over their own destiny. The Constitution has to face a bigger than the judicial scrutiny and that is the scrutiny of history. It was to be capable of meeting the challenges of historical forces. There is something greater than all of us and that is the nation and its future. That is the importance of this Bill.

Thank you.

Bill Relating to Resettlement in Jammu and Kashmir*

Sir, information has just been received that the Jammu & Kashmir State Legislative Assembly has today passed the Jammu & Kashmir Grant of Permit for Resettlement in or Permanent Return to the State Bill, 1980 as originally passed by it. As the House is aware, this was recently returned by the Governor of Jammu & Kashmir to the State Legislature for reconsideration in view of his opinion as to the constitutional infirmities from which it suffers.

Earlier we had told and written to Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah that the Government of India would be willing to favourably consider on humanitarian grounds any individual cases which he may have in mind for grant of citizenship.

I understand that the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir has stated in the Assembly today that the President has the right to refer the Bill to the Supreme Court under clause (1) of article 143 of the Constitution of India. He is reported to have assured the House that the State Government will not implement the Bill until the opinion of the Supreme Court has been received. The President has already decided to make a reference to the Supreme Court under clause (1) of article 143 of the Constitution for the opinion of the Court on the constitutionality of the Bill and the action is now being taken accordingly.

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Sir, firstly, I should like to thank the hon. Members for the support which they have extended on this important issue. Indeed there are other consequences, not only legal, there are political consequences. But as the hon. Member from the National Conference has pointed out, there is a history to this. The people of Kashmir have fought bravely, not just with words, but with their lives, against aggression and to remain with India. Therefore, we must not say or do anything that can weaken their resolve or place them in difficulties in this matter.

A question was asked about the reference to the Government of India. A letter was addressed by the Home Minister about the overstay of some people in Kashmir and in reply Sheikh Saheb referred to a Private Member's Bill. We then asked for a copy of the Bill. This came to the Home Ministry and the Home Ministry referred it to the Attorney-

* Making a Statement regarding the decision of the Government to seek the opinion of the Supreme Court on the constitutionality of the Jammu and Kashmir Grant of Permit for Resettlement in or Permanent Return to the State Bill, 1980, *R.S. Deb.*, 4 October, 1982. cc. 299-322.

General. When the Attorney-General's opinion on it came, it was sent back to the Governor.

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I do not have the exact dates.* But in this whole matter, our emphasis was not to create a situation of confrontation of any kind.

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It was sent after the Bill was introduced**. This was a Private Member's Bill. However in this period we kept in contact with the then Chief Minister about it and were trying to convince him. It is our information that he separately took legal opinion on his own also without reference to us, and this opinion supported that of the Attorney-General.

The other question was whether the Governor should have returned it to the Assembly at this stage. Now, one can have some hind-sight, but I am not prepared to comment on exactly who said what because this can unnecessarily create misunderstanding between people. But this was not the impression which the Governor got of the opinion of the Kashmir Government. His impression was different. He may be right or he may be wrong; I do not know. I doubt if the Bill would have been allowed to lapse. I think even if the Governor had not returned it, the matter would probably have been kept alive.

So far as the statement of some Pakistani writer is concerned, to which some reference was made, as you know, such statements are being made all the time. Arms are being inducted into Pakistan, sophisticated weapons, about which we have expressed our views in no uncertain terms within India, to the Government of Pakistan and to other Governments and peoples. I have no hesitation in saying that we stand—we have always stood and we stand firmly—for the unity and integrity of India, and that is paramount in all considerations and that overrides everything else. Well, I am glad that everybody is with me on this issue, but I should like to say that even if I were absolutely alone, I still would stand for the unity and integrity of the country. There is no doubt that we must, and I would naturally prefer that we act together in this matter, as the honourable Shri Kulkarni said, put down all separatist and fisiparous tendencies and movements in whichever part of India they may arise. On this question there are no two opinions. I have repeatedly spoken about unity, with the Opposition in a kind of national consensus on such problems. I should like to assure the honourable Shri Shariq who spoke on behalf of the National Conference, that we do not exaggerate this question. And that is why we have consistently been talking in a friendly manner firstly with Sheikh Sahib, Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah, and later with the present Chief Minister, Mr. Farooq Abdullah. We are fully aware of the sacrifices of the Kashmiri people and their sensitivity on this point. But I welcome the statement made by the honourable Member that they also believe in the unity and integrity of India and that

* Replying to Shri L.K. Advani's question "Can the Prime Minister enlighten us as to when it was done, on what date?"

** Replying to Shri L.K. Advani's query, "Was it before the Bill was introduced ? or, Was the Attorney-General's opinion sent only after the Bill was introduced?"

they will not do anything to disturb it. We had also told Sheikh Sahib that any individual cases where he considered injustice has been done or who find themselves in difficulty, would be considered sympathetically, and I believe that this is possible under our existing law. We do not doubt the intention of the people of Kashmir. But we wanted to warn them that certain difficulties might arise because of this Bill, which would affect them as well as the people of the rest of India. I think that these were all the questions that were asked. We know that there are communal organisations in Kashmir as well as in other parts of India, and from time to time they do make statements, their Members make statements or they try to provoke people, and so on. We have to meet these issues politically ourselves. We know that outside influences work not only in our country but in all countries. There is constant attempt for people to pull individuals or groups of people towards themselves in different directions. But, as I said, these are questions which we must meet together strongly and politically. I should like once more to express my appreciation of this Honourable House, of the hon. Members of this House for their standing firmly on this question—that is, the unity and integrity of our country—which is of paramount importance—only by remaining united can we solve the problems of each separate State, whether it is a State or whether it is a portion of a State. We know that our people have many grievances, and problems of development of such a vast population are gigantic in proportion. They can only be solved in conditions of peace and harmony and a sense of unity. Only that can give the strength, whichever party is in power. It may be our party in one place, or other parties in other places, whichever Government is there. Unless there is this overall feeling of belonging to a larger unit and each unit helping the other in solving the basic problems of the people, we can neither prosper nor strengthen the country nor solve the problems. Once more I thank you.

6

NATIONAL UNITY AND INTEGRITY

Shiv Sena*

Madam Deputy Chairman, I am very glad to see that Members from all sides of the House have condemned such separatist activities, tendencies which provoke one community against the other, and I am glad that they have all spoken in favour of equal rights for all Indian citizens to live and work wherever they might wish to do so. I fully support this stand. At the same time I must regret, Madam, that some Members thought it fit to make quite unjustifiable and uncalled for reflections of a personal character against our Home Minister**. One hon. Member *** has already made the position clear. I think that I am fully qualified to make a statement on the Home Minister's behalf here and to say that he does not have anything to do with the Shiv Sena. When my attention was first drawn to this matter sometime ago, I talked both to the Home Minister at that time–I do not think he was Home Minister, but Defence Minister–and the Chief Minister of Maharashtra. Both of them assured me that they would deal very strictly with this movement and would do everything possible to protect the living rights and properties of the communities of other States and minorities who were living there.

I might also say that when I heard of the recent happenings in Orissa, I drew the attention of the Chief Minister to this matter, and he has assured me that a meeting was held and they have also seen to it that such things should not be allowed. At the same time we must remember that when there are so many different types of people, different languages and so on, there are bound to be certain economic and social tensions. But if all parties agree on these issues, we should attempt to see that these tensions are minimised and that the people's energies are not provoked into such unhealthy and destructive channels. Whenever any such tensions occur we should always join together and see that we are able to create a better atmosphere and see that no harm is done.

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* Replying to a Calling Attention regarding activities of the Shiv Sena. *R.S. Deb.*, 17 August, 1967, cc. 4560-61.

** Shri Y.B. Chavan.

*** Shri M.M. Dharia.

Language and National Unity*

† Sir, as many hon. Members have also said, this is not an occasion to raise this topic for debate. I have expressed my views many times in this House and on other occasions also. There is no consensus in this House at present as you must have seen. It is not that the Members of the Congress or other parties are having a difference of opinion but something else has come up. The views expressed by Shri Bhupesh Gupta and Shri Anoop Singh... should also be considered.

In our country our brothers and sisters are living in various States and a doubt has crept in their minds that we are trying to impose something on them. We should remove this doubt. If we want our country to remain united then as Shri Bupesh Gupta has said, we have to see as to how we can take the people of various States along with us.

So far as the question of Hindi is concerned, we all agree with Shri Raj Narayanji. We agree that we have to promote Hindi and we also have to promote other languages of different States and give them equal importance because people can express their views properly in their mother tongue only. Therefore it is necessary for the progress of the country that the mother tongue should be promoted. There is no dissension on this point, neither from the South nor from Bengal or anywhere in the country. The only point of dissent, as Shri Bhupesh Gupta has also stated, is that how it should be implemented. If this debate creates discord then neither Hindi nor any other language will be promoted. Now a demand has been made. Shri Raj Narayan is more concerned about what is happening in the other House. The Members of the other House have also been elected from his State and from Bihar, Madras, Andhra Pradesh and from other States. They will also express their views there and if they have a different opinion then we would come to know. But as far as the views expressed in this House are concerned these can certainly be considered.

The Calling–Attention given by you, to which you wanted to draw our attention, was specially regarding the Benaras University....

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The Education Minister has said that he will give a statement on that. He is ready to give a statement even today. I would like to request the hon. Members, and as Shri Bhupesh

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* Speaking during the enquiries regarding the Calling Attention Notices on the agitation against the Official Languages (Amendment) Bill, 1967, *R.S. Deb.*, 5 December, 1967, cc. 2547-50.

† Original speech in Hindi.

Gupta has also said, that at present we should not do any such thing as could increase the misunderstanding which has cropped in the country and we should not increase it specially in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. I am unable to understand the reason behind the ongoing agitation in these States. Both these States are promoting Hindi and doing their work in Hindi.

One more thing I would like to say that we do not want that Hindi should be imposed on people without their consent and in the same way we do not want that English should be imposed. But English has always been a link language and now we want to change that. We want that Hindi or Hindustani should link us together. English should also remain here because it links with other nations because English is used when we attend international Conferences and meetings. So we want that a third language should be there that should link us with other nations. I want to clarify one thing, you should not think that we want that English should take the place of Hindi or some other State language. Nobody wants that. We only want to promote Hindi but we have to find a proper way to promote it. This can be done by the consent of those other States which are demanding more time....

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*†Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not want to take more time of the House. I just want to say a few words.

Next to religion, language is the only thing which arouses loyalties and emotions in human beings...

But, the question is : What are the functions of language ? Many Members have said here yesterday that language is meant for social conversation, for understanding each other, for doing one's daily routine work, for adding to one's knowledge and for bringing people together.

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All these are the functions of language. Language is also meant for providing equal opportunities to each individual for expressing his thoughts.

But what are we finding today ? Language is becoming a wall dividing the people from each other, and as Shri Acharya Kriplaniji has rightly said, language has become a source of conflict and it is really a matter of sadness. Language co-ordinates between science and thoughts–it should do so–and thus language should bring unity. Now the question is : how should we remove the walls of differences which have developed among us ?

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* Participating in the combined debate on the Official Languages (Amendment) Bill, 1967 and Resolution regarding Languages, *L.S. Deb.*, 12 December, 1967, cc. 6413–23.

† Original speech in Hindi.

It is a matter of consideration that whether the moratorium will break the barriers or create some more new barriers.* I agree that it will not check the incidents which are happening in the countryside but it will increase too....

Let me ask a question. In which country has language developed as a result of politics? Why does the English language today occupy the position of a principal language and why is it spreading in many countries of the world and has such a high status ? Has English developed due to its being official language at White Hall ? Or, did the English poets, writers, novelists and also traders, who travelled to the different corners of the world develop this language ? Let us not think that a language develops only through official work and in the absence of such work it will die out. In our country, our official languages were suppressed. It was, therefore, natural that during the freedom movement and after that when we became independent our people should have had a particular sentiments for their languages and should have been keen to promote them. It is not just a question of sentiments only. I agree that it is also important for the country.

Our friend, Shri Mody has said that we are encouraging poverty. There is no question of encouraging poverty. The question is that there are a large number of people in our country who due to their poverty and backwardness, did not get the same opportunities for education, employment and so many other things which some of us have got. I agree that these persons can be educated only through their mother tongue. And it is, therefore, necessary that in all the States education should be imparted in the mother tongue only, so that those classes of people who till now were denied opportunities for education, could be able to receive education and to derive equal benefit from the development of the country.

But how did Hindi come into the picture ? There are some countries which are bilingual, Belgium for instance. Switzerland and Yugoslavia have three or four languages each. In our country, there are fifteen languages. It is not surprising that we should have so many languages, as our country is so much bigger than many other countries. We are now making every effort to see that all our languages get a chance to develop, that the people of different areas receive education in their own languages, and that the business of a State is also conducted in the language of its people. I think there are no two opinions about this. But the business of the Centre cannot possibly be conducted in fifteen languages, however, dear they may be to us and however great regard we may have for them. It was, therefore, felt that one of our languages should serve as a national link, and Hindi was chosen for this purpose.

I am fully aware of the difficulty experienced by those whose mother tongue is not Hindi. Some of our South Indian friends have said that Hindi is not a developed language. Well, unless people learn it, speak it and help it grow, how will it develop ? We, therefore, invite them to lend a helping hand in developing Hindi. A language can develop only through constant use, not so much in Government offices, but outside, in everyday life. It will grow if more and more people write in it and books of other languages are translated

* Commenting upon Shri Piloo Mody's observation : "By moratorium ".

into it. We have been somewhat cut off from the rest of the world, because we remained unaware of much that was going on in the rest of the world, particularly in the realms of science and technology. So long as we remain cut off like this, we will not be able to progress, however much we may develop our languages.

If our languages develop, it is to be welcomed; there is need for their development. But I also consider it essential that there should be a language to link us with the outside world. If today we want English, it is not as a national language or as a language which should take the place of Hindi or Tamil or Bengali or any other regional language. It cannot be so, nor is it anybody's intention that it should be so. But we do think that in today's world the absence of knowledge of a foreign language will weaken us and keep us backward. Nowadays even in other countries which have their own languages, the study of a foreign language in the schools is made compulsory. There is freedom to choose any language, be it English, French, German or any other. But in actual practice we find that the majority of the people, be they Russians or of any other nationality, opt for English. Here we have an advantage because we already have some knowledge of English and also some arrangements for teaching it. These arrangements may not be so good today as they were before. The standard of English has fallen, and sometimes the English that is spoken here is particularly our own and perhaps may not be clearly understood in any other country. But despite all this, English is a link. I remember one or two stories. A boy was learning English. His new English teacher had come from England. So he asked the boy :

'Shyam, what is your mother-tongue ?

He replied 'Hindi, Sir', then the master remarked 'it has some words which sound like English'.

That boy was speaking in English; he was not speaking in Hindi. But the master thought that the child was speaking some other language which contained few words of English. It happens in our country. It gives us a base, which helps us in learning that language. We have to attend the international Conferences. But it is not only a matter of participating in the Conference, because for this purpose translation facility is provided in such Conferences, but when we meet each other and discuss matters then knowledge of link language is necessary because sometimes personal meetings are more helpful than the Conference itself. So, we need a link. Just as we need a national link, so also we need an international link. This does not mean that we need not learn other languages; they are equally important, we have also to keep ourselves in touch with them.

The shape that the language issue has taken in this country is rather strange. Now many hon. Members have raised the issue of the unity of our country. For some reasons, rightly or wrongly, the people of the South have come to have a suspicion that if Hindi is brought in, their jobs will be in jeopardy. This has naturally led to agitations. Shri Vajpayee has just now told us that the students of North India are also having such suspicions in their minds. Now, we have to find some way of dispelling this fear from their minds. Let us meet together and discuss this matter and find a solution for this problem. Now, what is the fact ? The fact is that English was continuing; whether we like it or not, English was

continuing. When we declared Hindi as the official language, the situation changed...By the Amendment Bill which we are now introducing, Hindi remains the official language. The Bill affects neither the status of Hindi nor its importance. On the contrary, we are saying that greater efforts will be made to teach Hindi. An Annual report will be presented to Lok Sabha, and the House will be able to see how the work progresses and what its flaws are. Persons belonging to non-Hindi-speaking areas are faced with this problem : how will they fit into the new picture that will be evolved as a result of the progressive learning of Hindi and the gradual increase in the quantum of work to be transacted in Hindi ? A solution was found according to which arrangements could be made for teaching Hindi to those who did not know Hindi and for providing translations, so that no one felt any difficulty. You all know that when such a compromise solution is evolved, it meets with allround opposition as it does not satisfy any of the groups completely. In an effort to reach a compromise, it becomes necessary to take some points from both sides.

Everybody thinks that this is not the right thing. One is helpless in this because everybody's demands cannot be met in full. What can be done is that a solution may be found which might partly meet the points of view of all. I shall repeat what I have said several times before, that we have to keep the unity of the country in mind. At present there are seven States which want to have an opportunity to learn Hindi but are against any haste being shown in this matter. 'Imposition' is not my word but theirs. There are seven States that do not want Hindi to be imposed on them.

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Whatever be their number-even if it is one–we do not want to impose anything on anyone. They have as much right as others have. There is no doubt that those who are in a majority have a slightly greater responsibility in this matter. The bigger man has correspondingly the greater responsibility, because nobody should feel that any person or group is being suppressed. I am glad that our South Indian brethren say that they will learn Hindi and that they should be given an opportunity to do so.

Now, I believe that this marks an advance from their previous stand and this is good for Hindi. I also agree that we have lost some ground. Some people think that we can decide this issue on the streets and not in this House. Shri Vajpayeeji has said that nobody incites the children. Perhaps it may be true but I want to remind you that some Ministers of the political parties have also participated in this issue....

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Whether it is good or bad, I am only expressing my views and you* can also do the same. I think that this is a very dangerous situation for our country that such an issue be brought to the streets. If some people think that they should destroy the vehicles of those coming from South-as has been done; or they should be beaten–I do not know whether they were beaten or not....

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* Shri Rabi Ray.

If all this has happened, then I would like to ask you whether they would like to learn Hindi ? They will never like to learn Hindi.

You have said that nobody was hurt, but we know–one of our sisters was attacked, and her ten years old girl was also attacked and her car was damaged. The mother of that girl likes Hindi; she has always supported and spoken in favour of Hindi; she was attacked....

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It is one thing to demonstrate and to burn houses, buses, cars and injure people is another thing....

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Because of this, I can see that the interest in learning Hindi is not increasing among the people but it is decreasing. I have only one aim. My aim is to adopt a policy which will help in forging a common link. There are some parties in the country, and in this House, who do not want a common link, and who say that all the languages should be allowed to function. This is dangerous. If it happens, the country will be Balkanized and its unity destroyed. That is why we want to make Hindi a connecting link, and that is why we want Hindi to progress. It, therefore, pains me when I find anyone taking a step or doing something which interferes with the progress of Hindi and weakens its utility and acceptance as a link language for the people of India.

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I am very happy that one of the leaders of Jan Sangh party has also expressed his views and condemned this violence. I am happy that leaders of the stature of Shri Jayaprakash Narayan and Shri Vinoba Bhave have also made statements against the use of violence by language agitators and also a procession was taken to their house to discuss this matter or something else.

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A surprising thing is that many of our students, who are disfiguring signboards and are agitating against English, are conducting this propaganda in English, not in Hindi. One of our Ministers told me that when the students spoke to him in English, he constantly went on replying in Hindi, but they went on talking in English.

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We want people of other countries to visit our country. We want tourists to feel welcome in our country. But agitations, like the one for disfiguring English signboards, are not going to be of any help. I appeal to you all, who by forcefully expressing their sentiments have lightened their hearts, to accept this Bill in the interest of the unity of this country and then let us see how can we all contribute to the progress of Hindi language.

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The passage of this Bill is necessary to remove all apprehensions from the minds of the people of the South and of other non-Hindi-speaking regions..... We have been giving them assurances for the last so many years, so first of all we have to remove all these apprehensions. We cannot postpone this matter any further. After we have done this, we can all sit together to sort out various other problems. These problems are not going to be solved by raising slogans. Concrete steps will be necessary to see that all our countrymen are able to learn Hindi and we are able to make this language a link amongst ourselves....

Our Foremost Concern–Unity and Integrity*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, communal incidents which in recent months have marred our national life in certain parts of the country, have caused deep distress as well as anxiety to this House, and to all right thinking people in the country.

Secularism and democracy are the twin pillars of our State, the very foundations of our society. From time immemorial, the vast majority of our people are wedded to the concepts of secularism, religious tolerance, peace and humanity. It is understandable that they should feel outraged and deeply disturbed at the aberrations which appear here and there and afflict small sections of society, and which arouse or exploit communal passions or promote disharmony, tension and violence. It is a matter for satisfaction that even in areas where trouble has occurred, the general public at large, whether belonging to one community or another, has lived in a state of complete harmony and peace. Indeed, there have been many instances in which people of one community have saved the lives and property of their fellow-citizens of another community.

The incidents which have occurred should, therefore, arouse the indignant disapproval of our people. I am sure this House will deplore and condemn these incidents and join me in conveying its sympathy to those who have been the unfortunate sufferers of such violence and crime at the hands of misguided elements.

As the House is aware, Government have recently appointed a Commission to go into these incidents. The object of the Commission will be to ascertain the causes which led to them and to recommend measures to prevent recurrence of such disorders in future.

The House is also aware that it has been recently decided to reconstitute the National Integration Council. I have invited leaders of various parties in Parliament and outside to join the Council, so that we can all sit together and deliberate over the problems posed by communalism, and linguistic and regional tensions. Government look forward to the constructive co-operation of all political parties and indeed, of all leaders of society to help in this task.

India has the privilege of being the world's largest composite society, and the home of many great and ancient faiths. Communalism is an evil which divides man and fragments society; it does against our very genus and cultural heritage. It holds a threat to the Unity and integrity of our country which must be our foremost concern.

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* Statement regarding Communal Harmony, *L.S. Deb.*, 22 December, 1967, cc. 9445-46.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the citizenship of India is a shared citizenship. Danger to even one single citizen, to whatever community, caste, religion or linguistic group he may belong, is a danger to all of us and, what is worse, it demeans us all. I am sure the House will join me in an appeal to the people of our country to come forward and work for solidarity and common national purpose. Every man, woman and child should be able to tread on Indian earth without fear and with pride of heart in belonging to this great motherland.

Communal Riots*

...What has happened in Bhiwandi or what has happened in other riots is equally sad and deplorable. And it is not something for which any of us would like to shirk responsibility. I certainly do not shirk it. But I think we must also face facts. What begins these riots? This was the question asked by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Is it a little body who threw a stone who begins the riot ? Is it the person who might do the first killing who begins the riot ? Or is it the atmosphere that is spread by speeches of the type which we heard here today? It is this atmosphere which starts all these disturbances.

And this is not a new thing. It is not something that has happened today for the first time. Is it a coincidence that when people who belong to the RSS or the Jan Sangh go somewhere, soon afterwards, there is riot in or close to that place? It may be that it is a coincidence, I do not know, but to me and to all other people who have watched this situation, it seems a very strange coincidence. I think that hon. Members are well advised to try and examine this situation and find out why this should happen.

It is very easy to blame somebody. It may be that the situation could have been dealt in a better way. I do not say that it could not have been. I have not studied it, and that is the main reason why I am going there. It is possible that something more could have been done. There is hardly any situation in the world where you could not have taken better precautions or done more. I do not know what advance notice the Government had.

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Much time was spent on speaking on Shivaji. There is nobody in this House. I would say, perhaps there is nobody in the country who does not have respect for Shivaji. But to use his name in order to incite people to communalism is not doing any justice to the memory of Shivaji.

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Communalism, whether it is Hindu or Muslim or Sikh or by any other community is deplorable. And it is not true to say that we have not deplored it when it has taken place or that we have not deplored it or spoken about it strongly, when any Muslim organisation or Muslim individual has said something which is capable of inciting people or leading to

* Participating in a discussion regarding the situation arising out of communal disturbances in the country, *L.S. Deb.*, 14 May, 1970, cc. 322-31.

any kind of outbreak or outburst. But that does not mean that we can condone what a member of the majority community does. As I have said on a previous occasion, anywhere where people are in a majority, they have a special responsibility. They are not merely one set of people there; they have a very special responsibility. Anywhere, where some people are stronger, they do have a responsibility towards the weaker section. In our country, in most places, the Hindus are in a majority, and therefore, they do have a responsibility towards the Muslims, the Christians, and towards whoever else may be in a minority. But in those sections where the others are in a majority—it may be that the Sikhs are in a majority in a certain place–they have a responsibility to the other minorities; it may be Hindu or Muslim or something else. Similarly in Kashmir, the Muslims are in a majority; certainly, it is their responsibility to see that the small number of Hindus who live there can live in peace and security. So, these brave sounding words, announcing that the Hindus are not going to stand for this and so on is merely a way of inciting people. This is what has poisoned the atmosphere of this country. Now, we know that some of these thoughts, some of these kinds of thoughts do lurk in people, in the minds of some people. The people are not perfect and there are such people, but all responsible and right thinking people must see how they can curb this tendency and how they can pacify such an atmosphere like this. If any such incident takes place, we must bend all our energies to see how we can help the people who are affected, how we can see that in future such a thing does not happen. But to use this occasion merely to launch attacks on people, to say things that will not only hurt the feelings of minority communities but will egg on the majority community in other places, to try and create some similar incidents is most improper.

We all know that most of these incidents are very small to start with. Why do they assume such large proportions? I was glad to hear Shri Vajpayee's remark that he himself said in Ahmedabad that people should not take the law into their hands. But to me at least, the rest of his speech appeared as if he himself was encouraging just that. 'We are not going to stand by.' What does it mean? It means 'that we will take the law into our hands, and take action. We have to take action.' What else was it ?

This was the meaning, as far as I could make out from speech.* If he did not mean this, I hope he will now clarify the position and tell people not to do so, and see that his own people do not do so.

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As I said, Shri Vajpayee did no great justice to the memory of Shivaji, but he did even less justice to our own old philosophy, our traditions and the very great heritage of this country, because our heritage is certainly not one which tramples on the rights of minorities. On the contrary, from time immemorial, India has opened her doors to all those who suffered in their countries; whether they belonged to different religions, different languages, different customs, we have opened our doors and given them shelter in the remote past. And even today, we attempt to do it....

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* Responding to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's observation, "I did not say that".

So the hon. Member is giving an entirely erroneous view of India to all the world. This is another great disservice to this country that in front of the world he parades as our philosophy and our tradition, ideas which in effect, are contrary to that tradition.

*** *** ***

I am not criticising his* party as a party, but merely two main aspects of it: one, the communal aspect and second, which is even more dangerous, the deliberate distortion of history, which is being done. Books are being written and published changing our known history. This is extremely dangerous.

*** *** ***

I am talking about a situation; what I am saying goes much deeper than what happened merely in Bhiwandi or Jalgaon or Ahmedabad. All these things form part of an atmosphere that is created. This is what I am trying to say, and I think it is extremely important that all members of Parliament, as indeed all Indian citizens, think about these things far more deeply. You will be given all the facts about this. Chavanji has given the facts as known on the first day, and Shuklaji will give you whatever has come to our knowledge since then. But it is time for us not to regard these happenings merely as isolated incidents that take place, incidents which we debate. It is time to realize that it is this kind of communal thinking, these speeches and articles which come out in newspapers which are creating this atmosphere....

*** *** ***

People have suffered and we have to see firstly what relief has to be given immediately and what we can do on a slightly long term basis. There is already an enquiry going on and it will come to its conclusions but I admit that I do not know how much such enquiries help. Any way, it is necessary to have them and I am glad that there is one. Now, apart from the question of relief and so on, we must all get together and see how we can prevent this kind of atmosphere growing, how we can go down to the people, village by village and mohalla by mohalla to create that type of neighbourly feeling which in the last analysis is the only protection. The Police can help in a particular situation but ultimately it is only one's neighbours who can be of real help. It is only the atmosphere in the country that can prevent this kind of rioting and senseless attacks on people. It is not just a question of whether some body threw a stone, why should not people get angry? That is where you judge the maturity of people. If people had done something wrong, by all means catch the guilty. But you do not catch the guilty. In fact the guilty are the first to get away and it is only the innocent who are looted and murdered.

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* Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Request from Tamil Nadu for a Separate Standard*

Now, as has been very clearly pointed out, the question is not of the National Flag. Whether it is the D.M.K. Government or any other Government of any State or any party in this country, there is no question that the National Flag is supreme and remains the only National Flag for the entire country, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, from the eastern-most area to the western-most area. There is no doubt cast, on this either by the D.M.K. Chief Minister, who has written to me, or by anybody else. Now, the question was whether they should have a separate standard.

*** *** ***

There is a distinction.** Each State in our country has a separate emblem. (*Interruptions*). This may be right or not. I am not saying that Tamil Nadu have made a right demand. I am saying that they did not ask for a flag and there is no point in repeating that they did. We do have many different, separate standards. The Princes have their flags, the regiments have theirs, and Governors have theirs. We have this situation.

*** *** ***

When the letter was received, as the hon. Members know, usually we first try to get all information and, therefore, the Home Ministry tried to get information about the practice in other countries. It was found that in some Federal States, for instance, the U.S.A.—it is only one example, but there are many others—the different States do have separate flags which in no way takes away from the importance of the National Flag which is above all State flags. I have sent a reply to the Chief Minister and the reply is that this matter has wider implications than merely those in Tamil Nadu, and that knowing the national feelings on this matter, I would like to discuss it with the Chief Ministers. Since there are different parties and different Governments in our country, we have made it a practice that whenever there is controversial matter or demand—not necessarily about a standard or a flag, but even about anything else—we do not normally say "No" straight away. We always try to talk to the person so that they themselves realise what the situation is and may agree not to pursue the matter. There have been disagreements and differences of points of view with other State Governments on some matters. Therefore, it is always better to talk about a matter, rather than do it in a manner which may create a tense Centre-State situation.

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* Replying to the questions on Minister's statement in response to a Calling Attention regarding the request of the Tamil Nadu Government for a separate Flag, *R.S. Deb.*, 25 August, 1970, cc. 127–48.

** Replying to Shri S.N. Mishra's remark : "What is the distinction between the two?"

No, I did not say that we should follow their example.*I just gave the information as an instance, that there were such flags not only in the United States but also in other countries of the world. This does not mean that we have to follow any other pattern. We have made our own pattern and wherever a new question arises, we have to find an answer according to our wishes and what we consider to be best for our country. That was by the way. The date of the Chief Minister's letter was, I think, given in the statement. The letter came sometime in June. I replied just a day or so before the Calling Attention in the other House, *i.e.*, in August of this year.

*** *** ***

I do not discern any question in what the hon. Member** has said. But I would certainly like to assure the House, what the House already knows, that I am myself against any separatist tendency, whether it is on the grounds of language, State, religion or caste. Any move which weakens the country should be resisted. But we must not also exaggerate certain things. As I said, we have to take a decision taking into consideration the views not only of the Chief Ministers but also others, and as such, the views of the hon. Members, I am sure, may also have some effect on Tamil Nadu.

*** *** ***

I think the hon. Member has made the same point to which I have replied to some extent, that this standard or pennant, whatever it is, may have the same place or may replace our national flag***. As I said earlier, this is not their intention so far as we have been able to gather. I have also already assured the House that nothing will be done or can be accepted which in any way will affect the unity of the country. At the same time, I must say that we should give the people of India greater credit than we sometimes do. There is a very strong basic unity amongst all the people of India and we have seen that at all times of crisis, regardless of other differences, this unity has come to the fore and has strengthened our nation.

*** *** ***

The hon. Member**** has made a good suggestion. It is our view also that we should discuss this matter not only with the Chief Ministers, but with different parties in any forum where these people can be present. It is our view and I have expressed it in the other House that while we discuss this, we should consider other questions like separate flags for Governors and so on.

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* Replying to Dr. Bhai Mahavir's remarks : "...I would also like to know whether we are going to be considered a federal Government like the United States and we are to follow their example in this respect."

** Shri A.G. Kulkarni.

*** Shri K.L.N. Prasad.

**** Shri N.R. Muniswamy.

I think most of these questions have been replied to*.But since the hon. Member has raised them again, I will answer. It is true that the President and the Governors have separate standards.

As far as the Corporations are concerned, I cannot say whether all of them have separate flags or not.

*** *** ***

The Madras Corporation may have one**. But, whether the other Corporations in India also have them, I do not know. This is also true, as I said, about other countries. I do not have the list of countries now. I have mentioned the USA, Switzerland, etc.

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I think, in the U.S.S.R. also. But, I am not absolutely sure.

*** *** ***

Now, about every town, I am afraid I do not have the information here.*** But, as far as the motives of other parties are concerned, I will leave it to the House to judge. It is not for me to pass judgement and it is not only on this occasion, but on many occasions such things happen. But it is true, as the hon. Member has said, that the intention is not to replace the National Flag, but something that can be used on those occasions when the National Flag is not used. For instance, the normal rules are that the National Flag should not fly over the residences of Ministers or anybody except on Independence Day and the Republic Day and other such national holidays. Now, the Tamil Nadu Government suggests that on those days, they will have the National Flag; but on the days when the National Flag is not allowed to fly on private residences, their standards should fly but on offices and Government buildings, the National Flag will remain as elsewhere.

The other places where they want to use this standard are the motor cars of State Ministers. There is no law about this but it is understood that Ministers should try not to use flags, except when on tour. Hence the Chief Minister, Tamil Nadu suggested that their Ministers could use their emblem.

About the other point, whether there is a separate standard, whether of a regiment or of a State in other countries, they do have the National Flag. I think, on the top right hand corner—but I am not absolutely sure—and they have their emblem on the other side.

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* Replying to Shri Thillai Villalan who *inter-alia* asked : "Are the President, the Governors and the Army officials having separate standards or not ? ... Is every Corporation in our country having a separate standard or not ... ?"

** Replying to Shri Thillai Villalan's remark : "The Madras Corporation is having."

*** Replying to Shri Thillai Villalan's other questions : "...Even in the State, is every town having a separate standard or not ? Is not our hon. Chief Minister, Shri Karunanidhi demanding only a separate State Standard and not a separate national flag ?..."

Sir, we accepted the National Flag in the Constituent–Assembly. I don't think that the Constitution as such mentions this subject so far as I know.* But the question is that we have all to live together. We are all parts of this country. Therefore, we must try and work in such a way as to make this living together easier and more peaceful. I personally feel that it was good for the Government of Tamil Nadu to write to us when they thought of such a statement. If there is a feeling in the country that this is not a goot thing, then I think we should all express our views about it, and I think the Tamil Nadu Government may themselves change their mind about it.

*** *** ***

I did not make any analogy between the two Governments**. In the other House, either I was asked a specific question about this matter, or a statement was made that even in the U.S.A. there were no separate flags. It was in this context that I made this statement.

So far as Rashtrapati Bhavan is concerned. I have my own personal opinion. I agree with the hon. Member*** that the National Flag should fly there. That is why I said that we were taking this matter up with the President and with the Governors and other people, and we hope that a decision will be taken very soon.

*** *** ***

I have no hesitation in giving a categorical answer to the last part of the hon. Member's question****. I personally do not think that there is any such motive. In the Constitution and in Parliament we have made it very clear that no part of India can secede from the country. So that question really does not arise.

Now the hon. Member made a remark about the national flag being in a corner. That is the accepted practice in all such standards that you have the national flag in the right hand corner and the other emblem or whatever it is occupies the Central Place or the other side.

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* Replaying to Shri A.P. Chatterjee who *inter-alia* said, "... the States certainly have every right to have a flag constitutionally and also otherwise".

** Replying to Shri L.K. Advani's remarks: "...I am sorry to state that an analogy should have been drawn between the United States and this federation of ours. There is no analogy whatsoever; there can be no more ill-conceived an analogy than this between the United States and India...."

*** Shri L.K. Advani.

**** Replying to Shri R.T. Parthasarathy's remarks: "...may I ask... whether this demand for a separate flag... by the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, by relegating to the corner the National Flag, the demand for a separate flag and a bigger emblem of a *Gopuram* there that has been predicted in the design, whether this is tantamount to demanding sovereign status for Tamil Nadu and whether this move is an ingenious move, which will ultimately end as the forerunner for separation from the Indian Union..."

*I fully appreciate the hon. Member's deep concern and I can assure him that so far as the National Flag and the Anthem are concerned, nothing can be permitted which will in any way bring down their importance, because they are supreme, but I do not think that question really comes in**.

*** *** ***

I think that the demand is only to fly the standard on the cars of Ministers and at their residences**. Not another flag, but their standard. The National Flag remains on all official buildings and whenever it is allowed to be flown on residences, at that time also, it will be the National Flag. This is the position.

*** *** ***

I have made it clear that Tamil Nadu has asked for a separate standard, not an emblem because they already have an emblem. They want a separate standard. There will be the National Flag in the right hand corner and a *Gopuram* which is their emblem on the left hand.

*** *** ***

An emblem cannot take the place of the National Flag***. It would be used on places or occasions where the National Flag would not normally fly.

*** *** ***

It will be flown on the private residences and cars of the Ministers on those occasions when they are not allowed to fly the National Flag. On occasions such as Independence Day or the Republic Day only the National Flag will fly.

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I have already stated that this matter will be considered in all its aspects and in its wider implications. This is what I have written to the Chief Minister also. Here I want to correct myself. I believe I said that the "standard" is put on the right hand corner. But I am told that it is on the upper left hand corner****.

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* Responding to Shri M.M. Dharia's observations: "...I would like to appeal to the hon. Prime Minister to use her good offices so that the National Anthem and the National Flag remain the same in the whole country and that no effort to undermine them in the name of standard will be allowed."

** Replying to the points raised by Shri A.D. Mani.

*** Replying to Shri Mahavir Tyagi's remark : " 'Standard' actually means flag."

**** The Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi gave identical replies to the questions asked by Members in the Lok Sabha on the statement made by the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs in response to a Calling Attention on the same subject (*L.S. Deb.*, 20 August, 1970, cc. 222-41).

Promoting National Integration*

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the Home Ministry touches many spheres of national activity. So, this *Debate* naturally is an important one and ranges over many areas.

Hon. Members have touched on many points. They have drawn attention to many defects and shortcomings.

Sir, no one is more conscious than I, that in a country of this size and diversity, and with our background of feudalism and colonialism, our problems are bound to be of immense magnitude. With development some problems are solved and others are created. Even societies which are regarded as affluent and stable are not immune from trouble, from unrest and even the growth of violence.

So, none of the questions is peculiar to our country. We know that rapid urbanisation has increased crime and violence in other countries.

I hope hon. Members will not think that I am trying to minimise our own duties or responsibilities, of which I am deeply conscious. But, I should like the honourable House to see our problems in perspective and not to forget that these are not normal times for us.

Our programmes and the recent elections to which many hon. Members have referred aroused expectations of change. But, first when we were poised for rapid advance in many directions, we have been overtaken by the tragic events on our Eastern border which have imposed a very severe strain on our entire administration.

Therefore, areas of hope and despair do exist side by side; and, when despair is exploited to propagate violence, this is bound to be a matter of concern.

I know that violence has many aspects and emerges from different roots. As I have said, the problem is not peculiar to India. Also, we are a developing society and development produces its own tensions and other difficulties.

We do not believe that the police is the answer to each situation or that violence can be met only by counter violence. On the contrary, to the extent that the socio-economic causes of violence in India can be identified and removed, we are trying our utmost to do so. But when violence is deliberately engineered, then it falls into another category, and

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* While replying to the debate on the Demands for Grants, Ministry of Home Affairs, 1971-72, *L.S. Deb.*, 24 June, 1971, cc. 243-56.

we are determined to meet the threat with all the strength at our command, and in this, the forces of law and order have to assert themselves. If certain political groups persist in the misguided and dangerous course which they have adopted, then the augmentation of the police strength to meet their challenge becomes essential.

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It is unfortunate that the hon. Member opposite and some parties think that we are against them. I have made it clear on all possible occasions that we are not against any particular party. But I do think that we should all look at the national aims. I presume that we are all committed to democracy, which implies certain methods of functioning and assumes the equality of rights of all citizens. So far as I can see, there is no middle way between bringing about social and political changes through democratic functioning on the one side and violence on the other. It is only if violence replace the settlement of issues by discussion and persuasion that we have to draw a line and appeal to all parties, groups and individuals to seriously consider if they really think that something can be achieved in our country by resorting to violence. Every political party, therefore, needs to examine seriously whether its faith in democracy is a durable one and not a mere tactic to undermine democracy through violence means. Can all parties represented in Parliament not join together to combat this violence and those who believe in it, instead of trying to battle amongst ourselves, each blaming the other ?

Many Members were concerned about the increase in the Police budget since 1950. This increase is not due to law and order duties alone. Since the early sixties, the police which includes forces such as the Border Security Force have been called upon to shoulder important responsibilities along with our defence forces to safeguard our borders. More than half the increase is for such forces.

There has also been an increase in the strength of the CRP. This is necessary because of the growing demand from the State Government themselves for additional forces for internal security and law and order duties. Even at present, the bulk force has been placed at the disposal of the State Governments for this purpose and at their own request. The CRP is not being used for repression. It is developed to safeguard the lives of people and their homes and to safeguard public property. I seriously protest against the malicious compaign to denigrate the CRP. I know, and I have acknowledged in the House on earlier occasions also that there have been cases where members of the CRP or of the police has misbehaved or have gone beyond what they should have done, and wherever our attention has been drawn, we have tried to deal with the situation....

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But generalised allegations which are sometimes made by the hon. Members opposite do not help the situation or solve any problem.

I myself am very much concerned with the manner of functioning of the police and we are trying to modernise their training and the equipment they use so that the force can

become qualitatively and professionally better. We want our services to regard themselves as servants and friends of the people. We want to go into all aspects of the training, not only of the police, but of other public administrators so as to give them such an outlook in their dealings with the people.

Law and order is not an isolated subject; it is very much linked with economic and social problems and the conditions of the people. I believe that authority can best be wielded in a spirit of understanding and co-operation. But this also has to be two sided; the police also need the co-operation of the people, and if they are always going to be regarded as enemies of the people, that will make it more difficult for them to behave as they should, consistently with sympathy and friendship for all people. This is part of the difficulty, as some Members have noticed, which we are facing in West Bengal.

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In a debate of this kind, it is natural that much attention should be paid to the relations between the Central Government and the State Governments. I think we all agree that the States and the Centre form part of a single entity, the unity of India. I do not think anyone is really serious when he suggests any kind of crisis of confidence between the Centre and the States. Of course, problems and differences do arise from time to time, but there is no problem which cannot be solved through discussion, consultation and adjustment.

We have had Government of various hues and political persuasions in different States. I have had the fullest co-operation—I must express my appreciation of this—from all the Chief Ministers, and I certainly hope that they feel the same about the Centre. We have always done whatever we could to help them in so far as it lay within our power.

As I have mentioned on earlier occasions, much of the dispute is with regard to the allocation of finance, and as we have extremely limited resources, it is not really within our hands to increase State allocations. While on the one hand almost every State would like to have more financial powers, on the other, on many occasions they find it convenient to ask the Centre to take over something because they cannot afford to complete a particular project or they would like us to undertake another programme or they have dispute with a neighbouring State and so on.

So all these things have to be gone into very thoroughly. I do not know if any useful purpose will be served by freezing the relationship between the Centre and the State into any rigid statutory enactment or even institutional devices. Since even the most careful thought now cannot possibly foresees every problem that could arise in the future. That is why, a certain flexibility is always helpful in any human relation rather than very set and rigid patterns.

Many suggestions and schemes have been put forward in the name of better Centre-State relations. It is for the hon. House, and of course for all the Chief Ministers of States, to consider whether these will help in achieving closer co-operation between the Centre and the States or whether they will create new points of conflict, whether they will help in strengthening the unity of the country or in encouraging divisive tendencies. Whatever

problems there are or may arise in future can be solved not by confrontation and argument, but by a joint attempt at finding satisfactory solutions. Naturally, no solution can satisfy everybody, but our attempt should always be to see what will serve the larger good. Whenever any such question about the States rises, the emotions of the people are easily aroused especially in the name of language or of religion or of border disputes or the magic that is attached to separate Statehood. There is a political aspect to most of these questions, but this can be exploited or used only if there are genuine economic and other grievances, and in many of the questions which have been raised here, the main problem in all our backward areas is an economic one, that of development. We have been making efforts in this direction and trying to do whatever is possible to see that where there has been any negligence or delay in development this should be made up. Reference was naturally made to Telengana and here also we are making efforts and trying to involve the people in the process of socio-economic change. There is a feeling that this sense of participation should be further strengthened. We have been exchanging views with various people. I agree that all these disputes which exist in this area or in other area should be speedily solved.

Some Members spoke with understandable passion about the communal tension which comes up from time to time and about which we all feel very strongly. The National Integration Council was meant to promote integration and cohesiveness in our social-political structure and to look into the problems of the minorities as well as of any deprived section such as the Harijans. When the Council met in Srinagar some years ago, the meeting was over-shadowed by the communal riots which had taken place just before. So, although we mentioned all the different aspects of the Council's work, our efforts were confined to dealing with communalism in its narrower sense, that is communal violence. We know that tensions in society have many origins—cultural, economic and social. These have to be resolved. We should not allow them to errupt in ugliness and violence. The well-being and satisfaction of the minorities should be our very special concern. That is why we specially mentioned this in our election manifesto and on other occasions, and these commitments must be fulfilled. One way of doing this is broadening the whole concept of national integration. For this purpose appropriate machinery at the governmental level is being considered, and one of the main functions of this machinery will be to look into the special problems and interest of the minorities, and although I say minorities, as I mentioned earlier, when the Council was formed we had intended it to cover the whole sphere of the rights of Indian citizen, of Harijans and so on, even though there are separate bodies which look after them.

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Well, it is not true that the years were entirely wasted because something has been done, and I hope that now the effort will be speeded up*. We have been looking into the whole question, for instance, of the services. Many of these matters do not come out in the open, but this does not mean that they are being ignored. They are being looked into. They were not looked into by the National Integration Council, but they are being looked

* Responding to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark: "These are almost wasted years".

into by the Home Ministry. But I agree that more can be done and more should be done. We will do more. Part of this is the question of the Urdu language. Here also I have made my views very clear. I have discussed this matter with some Chief Ministers and so far as the Chief Minister of U.P., for instance, is concerned, he has taken various decisions; he is going to implement them; he may have even begun to do so. We are taking up this matter with all the States concerned.

*** *** ***

We have drawn a plan of what should be done and then we discussed it with the Chief Ministers of U.P. and some other States. But the problem is not the same for all parts of the country, it concerns specially the U.P., Bihar, and Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh has already done something. What we are doing is entirely what is guaranteed to the minorities in our Constitution.

The other problem which is of grave concern to us all is that of organisations and individuals receiving foreign money. This matter has an important bearing on the functioning of our institutions, especially our political institutions. Government are most anxious that political organisations, academic and social bodies working in important areas of national life should function in a manner consistent with the values of the sovereign democratic republic. That is why after this matter was taken up in this House earlier, Government agreed to have a thorough enquiry into the matter. The broad conclusions of that enquiry revealed the necessity of imposing suitable restrictions on the receipt of funds from foreign organisations, agencies and individuals other than in the course of ordinary business transaction. We promised to consult leaders of the Opposition on the principles of such legislation. This we are doing. My colleague, the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs has sent a note giving the principles underlying the proposed legislation to the leaders of the Opposition. Various suggestions including those contained in certain Bills on this subject which are being introduced by hon. Members, have been kept in view. However, I should like to add that while such measures are necessary and should be taken and will be taken, corruption cannot be cured merely by putting a sentinel on each person. Fundamentally it is the social attitude which counts. Therefore, we must not only take steps to punish corruption but also create an atmosphere which will not encourage it in any way... (*Interruptions*) I think, I should, refrain from replying to the comments of the hon. Member; he is trying to provoke me.

The other point which is of concern to the entire country is that of unprincipled defections. We fully share the concern for this malady in our body politic and we are determined to take steps to check it. Hon. Members know that I had already discussions with party leaders on this question just before the elections but at that meeting many of them expressed misgivings and it was not at all clear what they wanted us to do. Therefore, I wrote to them almost immediately, in fact a day or so after the meeting, seeking their specific reaction. Inspite of reminders, very few replies have been received. But after careful consideration, the Government have decided to go ahead and introduce a Bill based on the recommendations of the Committee on defections.

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- Something came in the way of the Opposition Leaders agreeing to the Bill at that moment, to put it mildly.*

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Anyhow, in this matter we have to have some kind of national consensus and this was reached in that committee in regard to certain legislative proposals. Now, we are consulting the Chief Ministers....(*Interruptions*).

*** *** ***

I can assure the hon. Member that I am not issuing personal directives to any State at all**. I neither have nor do I propose to do so.

In this connection, may I say that one hon. Member I forget his name—earlier in the afternoon made some comments about our party giving directions for the toppling of Governments. There is no truth in this at all. At our meeting there was a discussion and we were informed by Members belonging to two States about the situation developing in their States. They did not think the Governments there could survive. (*Interruptions*) They certainly said that; we accepted the situation—(*Interruptions*). For instance, in Punjab, the quarrel was between two parts of the same party. The hon. Member knows, we had nothing to do with the fall of the West Bengal Government either. It was a quarrel between the constituent units of their own Government. (*Interruptions*). Whether you believe it or not, it is a fact. It is gracious of the Hon'ble Member to believe in something which is true. (*Interruptions*)

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Well, as no hon. Member here said, that we see where the money is. It certainly is not with us.***

Now, the point is that we are consulting the Chief Ministers on this issue.

The other important issue is the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Bill. This Bill, as hon. Members know, was introduced in this House in May, 1968, but then at the request of the Member and, because it was such an important measure, it was referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses. The Bill, as amended and reported by the Joint Committee, was passed by the Lok Sabha in August, 1969. It was awaiting consideration by the Rajya Sabha when the Fourth Lok Sabha was dissolved. We intend to bring this Bill before Parliament soon.

It was inevitable that reference should be made to the privy purses and privileges. Government stand fully committed to their abolition. It is true that Members are unhappy

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* Responding to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark, "You are more serious than the others; that is the impression you want to convey".

** Responding to Shri Bhogendra Jha's remark, "Under your personal direction, it is reported that defectors are promoted to ministership in Bihar".

*** Replying to the reference of 'Money Bag' made by Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu.

at the delay in this, but I would like to remind them that the Supreme Court's judgement has raised a number of constitutional and legal issues. We should be able to sustain any action taken. That is why it is taking some time, but I think we will be coming before the House soon.

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We are trying to be as quick as we possibly can.

It is always interesting to hear Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's views. If he will excuse my saying so, his party has made a special virtue of distorting facts....(*Interruptions*).

*** *** ***

He spoke about the guidelines for the Governments, and he himself acknowledged that the President has formed a committee to go into this question. As a Government we have nothing to do with that committee. I believe they have met, but they have not talked to us and I do not know if they have talked to any Members of the Opposition.

*** *** ***

He is not insulated*. But he has formed a committee of Governors. They are meeting. When they want us to come into the picture, the President will ask us, but otherwise I do not think it is proper for us to interfere.

*** *** ***

Well, you see, it takes place by mentioning something which may contain a little bit of truth**. Of course, in many matters not now but on earlier occasions, there have been allegations with no truth at all. But sometimes, there is a little bit of truth and a little bit of imagination combined.

People always view others according to their own light. I mean, what they themselves would do, they tend to think that other people are doing. This is the trouble in life.

Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu is always thinking that we are interfering in the service and we are giving orders. Unfortunately the same is the case with Mr. Mishra, who should know better.

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The hon. Member is going from one aspect to another. The representations made were not always the same. The first was with regard to the people in Andamans. One point was decided. Then the purview was extended. I fully realise that all that needed to be done has not been done and some deserving people have been left out. We are going into the matter.

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* Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's questions : "What about the President? Is he completely insulated ?"

** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark : "Where was the distortion of facts"?

- I should like to appeal once more to the House this is not from the party point of view or the point of view of making it less difficult for the Government. As the House knows, I enjoy difficulties so that is not my line. In fact, my favourite poem, which I often quote in public meetings etc. is a poem by Gurudev to the effect :

"Let me not pray to be sheltered from
dangers but to be fearless in facing them."

Today the danger is not to me, or to my party; the danger is to the whole country. Therefore, I make this appeal to all of you because I presume, as I said earlier that we in the House are committed to the democratic process.

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That is for him* to judge. What leadership I have given the people, they are very well aware.**

Coming to Shri Mishra, he made many remarks before the elections so perhaps he should be a little more careful in what he now says. I should be grateful if Shri S.N. Mishra and all the other hon. Members of this House would help us in leading the people and making them strong. Certainly, criticism could be there on how to increase our efficiency. So far as the police and other services are concerned, their methods should be more humane, more modern and the attempt should be not so much to punish as to reform and to help people to go along the right path. With all our strength we must fight against all those tendencies and forces which are trying to weaken our country. You may say that the Government is not doing enough or the Government is bourgeois—you may use any adjective you like—but that should not be an excuse, at this grave juncture in our history, to divide the nation. That is what I would humbly ask the House. I hope the House will vote all the demands.

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* Shri Shyamnandan Mishra.

** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's question, "What lead do you give to the country" and Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu's remark, 'leaderless'.

Nation - Building*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the last two days, listening to the debate on the Demands for Grants for the Home Ministry, I was reminded of an English song which I had heard when I was in my early teens. The British posters for the recruitment to the Navy at that time used to bear the legend, "Join the Navy and see the world." And on this slogan, the sailors had written a song, saying :

"We joined the Navy to see the world
And what did we see, we saw the sea
And the Atlantic was not as gigantic
And the Pacific was not as terrific
As they were made out to be."

Sir, I came to this House expecting a strong onslaught from the hon. Members of the Opposition, but what did I find ? A very mild rehash of the points they have been making in the House and outside on many occasions.

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The hon. Member opposite has always been very gracious and I have always been grateful to him for that.**

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You are suspicious about everything.*** Actually, Shri Bhagat took my point, because I had noted down when you were speaking that I had not suspected you of so much imagination and that your speech sounded very much like a plot of good detective story. But I might tell him that I am not an admirer of Mr. James Bond.

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I am trying to pay you a compliment.**** Obviously Members were so little enthused by their own ideas that even the oratory to which we looked forward on such occasions was largely absent and I must say I missed it.

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* Replying to the debate on the Demands for Grants, Ministry of Home Affairs, 1972-73, *L.S. Deb.*, 24 April, 1972, cc. 185-96.

** Responding to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark, "Be grateful then".

*** Replying to Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu's remark, "Suspicious".

**** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's observation, "How complementary to him ?"

...The allegations which were made by the hon. Members opposite have been answered by many other hon. Members who spoke from this side and by some who spoke from their own side.... (*Interruptions*).

My colleague Shri Pant has dealt with the question of violence. I can only express my amazement at the brazenness with which the CPM are now talking about the negation of democracy, one party rule and so on. Such talk has also give the opportunity to a section of the foreign press who have always tried of find things against us to report and to magnify them and to mislead the people. Now they give the impression that we have liquidated or banned all political parties in this country, which as you all know is very far from the truth. I also see from the newspapers that the CPM are contemplating some kind of agitation. It is not clear whether this will be violent or whether they will adopt non-violent means which they have all along condemned as reactionary and even contemptible.

We all know that at no time have they accepted democracy as we understand it and even now I doubt if they are willing to concede that the democratic system can deliver the goods. They have always and–I speak subject to correction–and I think they still believe that the ends justify the means. As the House is aware our own belief has been and continues to be that means are as important as ends for means govern and shape the ends.

The charge of rigging the elections is fantastic. It has been made before and it has already been strongly refuted. Why is such a charge made? Curiously enough the extreme right and the extreme left have combined on this matter. Perhaps this reflects the fact that neither is too deeply committed to democracy.

The Congress lost quite heavily in 1967. We did not come and complain about these things. We tried to assess the situation : what were the causes of our defeat. Based on the experience we have been able to build our strength again. The Congress had never, and does not now believe in violence. We have condemned all acts of violence whether they are committed by Marxists, by Communists or by anybody else... (An hon. Member : Congressmen also)... certainly by Congressmen, anywhere they take place, I do not condone any violence or wrong doing. I have no hesitation in saying that if anyone in my party....

*** *** ***

I was saying that I do not condone violence or any wrong doing : if any in my party or pretending to be in my party is indulging in such acts, he must also be dealt with. But let the opposition not delude anyone that there is no difference between the violence indulged in by the Marxists or the communalists and that of some misguided youths. One is part of a creed and the other is a temporary aberration.

Some points were made, some miscellaneous points, which were not about the Home Ministry as such, but about me and about what I have said outside the House. I hope that I shall be excused if I also wander just a little way off the main subjects to refute those allegations.

It was said that co-operation was given by all parties last year and that this was misused. I must confess that I have not been able to understand this point, because the co-operation was offered at the height of the crisis, and I have publicly, in this House and outside acknowledged this with thanks.

So far as the elections are concerned, the whole point of democracy is that every party puts forward their point of view, and if they think any other party's policy is wrong, they criticise that policy. That is surely not an aspersion on the co-operation offered earlier for a particular purpose by the opposition parties.

The attitude of the RSS is well known if I speak about it here, there will be an acrimonious exchange, but I can only say that their attitude and the training which they give to young people are antithetical to our way of life. Shrimati Subhadra Joshi and some others have spoken about these matters during this debate and on the Private Member's Bill.

Another point which was made was that we made requests for votes on the basis of having done something for a particular community. I do not see how this can possibly be regarded communal'. All parties and the Government were saying to defferent groups, this is what we have done or what we intend to do for you. Obviously, if you speak to one group, they are not interested in what you have done for somebody else, you have to say what you are doing for them. By no stretch of the imagination can this be labelled communal.

Similarly, mention was made of my appeal for strong and stable Congress Governments in the States. I very clearly did say that I thought only strong and stable Congress Governments could implement our programme. At the same time, I made it clear that at no time have we not given full co-operation to other Governments, when elected. And in fact we have given full co-operation to whoever the people have chosen or voted for. (*Interruptions*).

I do not want to go into the matter which the hon. Member has raised just now. We have only to look to the history of the last year to see how this question arose and who began the process. It certainly was not the Congress.

I am sorry the hon. Member of the Swatantra Party, Shri Mody did not speak. The House always looks forward to his speaking, it gives some light relief. The Swatantra Party's thinking has not yet shed its unreality, which is so reminiscent of what Alice found in her wonderland. Usually it was my friend Shri Siddhartha Shankar Ray who quotes from the story of Alice but now that he is not in the House. I have to mention it.

It was significant also that the Swatantra Party should show concern at what is happening in the territorial waters of Bangla Desh, a free and friendly neighbour of ours, but not at the sustained anti-Indian stance and harmful propaganda of the United States and their help to our enemies. I am not saying that such matters should be mentioned, I am just pointing out that, if they have to mention an outside power it is of interest to see what they choose to mention. The Jan Sangh and the Swatantra Party have consistently tried to denigrate the leadership of the country and national policy.

One hon. Member spoke about a hoarding. Perhaps this indicates the height of his vision. I cannot guess what Air India meant or convey, but being familiar with their previous publicity, when I saw that particular hoarding, I thought it was referring to the leadership of their own little Maharaja and the superiority of their airlines. I am sure that was the reaction of most people. It would indeed be sad if irritation with an individual makes some people lose their sense of humour.

My colleague Shri Pant has dealt with most of the points that came up in this debate, but because of lack of time, he could not mention two. Even these are not new. The Government's views have been explained on earlier occasions. One is the question of defections. It is astonishing that hon. Members should continue to criticise us for the delay. As Shri Pant has said, the delay was due to some of the leaders of the Opposition not replying to our communications. At the meeting of the representatives of a number of parties and of some Independents Members expressed themselves in favour of disqualifying defectors from continuing as Members of the Legislature. However, the Committee on Defections had not reached any agreed conclusion. So, we thought it necessary to consult the Chief Ministers. This has been done and since there is vast support for this suggestion, Government will soon bring forward legislative proposals to give effect to this measure.

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The second major point of concern to us is the role of foreign money in public life. Legislative proposals has been formulated and we shall soon bring them to the House, to curb such undesirable transactions. The proposals contemplate outright prohibition, prior permission and intimation. Outright prohibition applies to candidates for election to a Legislature, Members of Parliament and of State Legislatures, a political party or an office bearer there of, Government servants, employees of corporate undertakings, the editor, printer and publisher of a registered newspaper. The restriction regarding prior permission will apply to all other organisations, or groups of persons, whether incorporated or not, with a definite political, social, educational, religious, cultural or economic programme, including any trust, endowment or foundation. Intimation in the prescribed manner will be required in the case of other individuals.

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We now come to the important question about Centre-State relations and the prickly question of State autonomy. I find that even those who used to plead so earnestly for a strong Centre have now somewhat moved their ground. I simply cannot understand why there should be tension between the Centre and the States. Whenever I have the opportunity of meeting the Chief Ministers or other Ministers from all the States–during my tenure they have belonged to all parties. Hon. Members opposite know that the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu is in Delhi. We had a Swatantra Government in Orissa and we had a Socialist Government in Bihar. Chief Ministers and Ministers came to meet me. I have never found any kind of acrimony, difficulty or even disharmony in settling various problems with them.

Development is a total effort of the Government in which every Ministry of the Centre and all State Governments have an allotted role. We have given a new focus to the plan

by emphasising development at the ground level. We have given special attention to all those sections of the population and all those regions which have so far been neglected. Our endeavour now is to strengthen the weakest limbs.

The problem of autonomy has to be viewed in this perspective. Does any State feel helpless in serving its people ? Or, has the Constitution or the Central Government come in its way ? Some people have complained about delay. I know that sometimes there is delay in the sanctioning of projects. But we can certainly find ways to improve this situation. We all know that sometimes State Governments also try to score points over the Centre. We do not object to this. It is all in the rules of the game.

Some Members have raised the question of the distribution of funds and the financial powers of the States. The allocation of financial resources between the Centre and the States has been provided in our Constitution, keeping in view their respective responsibilities and by carefully balancing the needs of national planning with the scope necessary for regional initiative. It is perfectly understandable that each State should ask for more funds for its own development. Every State, regardless of what party is ruling there, complains of complete apathy towards it, although I may mention in passing that funds made available to the States have not always been fully utilized by them. The crux of the problem before all of us is that if each State looks only to its own needs and requirements, how will regional imbalance be removed ? The experience of the last 22 years has demonstrated the soundness of the approach adopted by our Constitution-makers. The imperatives of national security and of more rapid social and economic development continue to be as important today as in the past. Every State has some common problems with the rest of the country and some specific problems of its own. What is to be the relationship between the parts and the whole, between diversity and unity ? The freedom movement, in which my party was in the forefront, and the Constitution both these have evolved a system in which there is general cultural and linguistic satisfaction. This strengthens unity and at the same time preserves diversity, for we believe that diversity itself can be a source of strength.

I presume that all of us here, regardless of what party we belong to, are working towards a more egalitarian society. We are deeply conscious of the hardships suffered by large sections of the population–the landless, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, linguistic minorities, religious minority groups and so on. They have genuine grievances and do not always get a fair deal from society. A continuous and unremitting effort to allay the apprehensions and to remove grievances is basic to national integration.

I feel that there should be a continuous study of their problems. This requires the collection of material which is at present scattered over a large number of agencies. To facilitate this we have set up a Directorate of National Integration in the Home Ministry.

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It is still doing work at different levels.* It is not doing anything spectacular but it is functioning.

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* Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark : "The National Integration Council seems more or less dead."

Shri Madhu Dandavate did not speak in the debate but he has written to me about the atrocities on harijans.

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The Directorate which have mentioned will look into such matters also.

Shrimati Lakshmikanthamma drew our attention to the discrimination against women in some service rules. She pointed out that married women were not entitled to appointment as of right, and that when a woman already in service marries, she might be asked to resign. We are removing this discrimination.

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Shrimati Sheila Kaul, Shrimati Mukul Banerji and Shri H.K.L. Bhagat spoke about the police. I share their concern, but this is a two-way business and the question is a complex one. Policemen are a part of society. They are also fathers, sons, brothers and so on ; they are also either villagers or townsmen, and they should be sympathetic to the problems of the people and the people should show greater respect to them.

In the old days their training did not fully equip them for this type of a role not only in our country but in most countries. The Home Ministry's work is concerned not merely with crime but with social and political malaise and other evidences of dissatisfaction. The traditional,outlook of merely maintaining law and order has to change and be constantly renovated. We give importance to the Police Training Committee which was recently set up. We must aim at an enlightened public and an enlightened police.

We seek the citizen's participation in helping to solve crime and disorder. So, the public and the police, both must change old habits. The public should trust the police more and the police in their turn should be more worthy of public trust.

I should like to touch upon one other matter, which is capital punishment. I know this is a controversial subject. The Law Commission has expressed an opinion in favour of retaining it. This was supported by several of our Chief Ministers. But in spite of a very thorough study the Law Commission's report was not able to establish any real relationship between the incidence of murder and capital punishment. They have pointed out, as indeed have several books on the subject, to a large number of cases where after a man has been put to death, it has been found that there was a miscarriage of justice and the real murderer either had himself confessed or was discovered. But in the mean time an innocent man had lost his life. This is a matter to which I should like hon. Members and the public to give thought.

There was some mention of greatness. I should like to ask you, Mr. Speaker, and through you, the hon. Members of the House, whether in the speeches of the hon. Opposition leaders there was any glimmer of greatness ? Have they are not confined themselves to narrow limits and to small matters, showing utter disregard for the larger problems and difficulties before the nation and the vast challenges which we face today?

They have completely ignored the mood of self-confidence which is so obvious in our country today.

Greatness is not given or taken away by words. Only history can be the final judge. But we are not interested in the greatness of an individual; we are interested in the greatness of the country. If India is great, all of us will be great; every Indian, whether here or abroad, can hold his head high. If India is not great, no one in India can be great, no matter what his position is. The policies and the work of this Government are directed towards the aim of making India great. We may make mistake, our steps may sometimes be slow but no one can deny that the country is advancing step by step. And that is what matters.

It is for all of us to assess what is in the country's interest just now–a feeling of defeatism or a feeling of confidence. The House knows that Government have never tried to draw a veil over our shortcomings. But there has to be some perspective in our outlook. I am reminded of two men who were in confinement and had only a small window on the outside world. Looking out one man saw only the mud while the other saw the stars.

With these words, I request the House to vote for the Demands for Grants relating to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Demand for Inclusion of Nepali in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution*

Sir, I entirely agree with what Shri Indrajit Gupta has said that it is better to take decisions across the table rather than allow the situation to get "hotted up" and that is what we are trying to do. As the House knows, no question is ever simple. Every question evokes various reactions and therefore we have to see what the repercussions are likely to arise. I have talked to the people who came to see me and, as the hon. Member** knows, that delegation consisted of members of all parties of the Darjeeling area. We took them into confidence and told them what our difficulties were and how we are trying to meet them. During our first meeting, the language demand was, of course, very prominent, but they also touched upon a number of other matters. They felt that they were not getting equal opportunities in various areas. The Government of West Bengal has taken every step, assuring them that there will be no kind of discrimination in the services and various other activities. Nepali has been accepted as a language of that area. Many other facilities are being given. This time the stand of the delegation was a little different. They said the demand was an emotional one. We have assured them that we are looking into it.

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This was the word they used : it is not my word.*** (*Interruptions*).

So, I assure the hon. House and the hon. Member that we are looking into this matter in depth. A number of other States are also concerned. We have had a talk with the Chief Minister and we are looking into it.

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* Replying to the point raised by Shri Indrajit Gupta, *L.S. Deb.*, 15 March, 1973, cc. 199-200.

** Shri Indrajit Gupta.

*** Replying to Shri Dinen Bhattacharya's remark : "No question of emotion."

Situation Arising out of Communal Riots*

Madam Chairman, the subject of communalism is an exceedingly important one because, in fact, we believe that it is central to the unity and strength of our country...(*Interruptions*)

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I think the hon. Member** who spoke last rightly pointed out, and I would support him, that communalism does not relate merely to the chauvinistic feelings or friction between Hindus and Muslims but also to other minorities and even, I would say; the tensions which are now being created between different castes and the attitude of aggressive groups and dominant groups, whether they are socially dominant, economically dominant or merely numerically dominant, towards those whom they consider to be weaker than themselves. And the present general atmosphere of violence does contribute to the aggravation of tension.

Now, I want to make it clear that I do not think that Hinduism is, in any way, threatened either by Islam or by Christianity. I say this because this is sometimes the basis of the propaganda that is made. What does threaten it is those who want to narrow down the breath of its vision and the grandeur of its whole concept and the wide sweep of its thought. India has an age old tradition of acceptance of the fact that there are many ways to truth out of giving respect to different religions and different approaches. It is this tolerance which has given Hinduism, its resilience, and therefore its staining power. It is India's capacity for synthesis and adaptation that has created our composite culture which can flourish only in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and accommodation. This has been the Congress creed and our aim.

Now, I must admit, that as human beings we Congress men and women sometimes faltered and failed to live up to our high precepts; but I think that the people and the Administration knew that we stood firmly for Secularism and that we shall continue to do so always. As I said, it is the very basis of our existence and, we think, of the existence of the country....

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* Participating (as a Member) in the discussion on the Motion regarding the situation arising out of recent communal riots (moved by Prof. Samar Guha), *L.S. Deb.*, 5 December, 1978, cc. 271-282.

** Dr. Subramaniam Swamy.

Now, I would like just to say a word about the Aligarh Muslim University, because this was mentioned by some hon. Members.

I was advised at that time that this Bill would strengthen secular elements and therefore, generally strengthen the Muslim cause. It was never our intention to hurt their feelings in any way, or to weaken the university or to change its character. So when certain representatives and different delegations came up to me I agreed to reconsider the matter. We did indeed express this view later on in our election manifesto.

Any discussion with regard to questions concerning the minorities should be taken only after the fullest consultation with all groups of them. I am afraid that we did not give full consideration to this at that time. However, the situation is always too delicate, for their sentiments to be wounded.

Now I should like to add my voice to the many Members who spoke yesterday in expressing my appreciation and in congratulating the faculty and the students of the Aligarh Muslim University for the help and succour which they gave to the Hindus and the Muslims who were victims in the Aligarh riots and also to the many Hindus and Muslims who helped one another at such a time of distress.

As I was passing through Aligarh station by train, many people came from both communities and gave me a vivid account of the mischief that was done and the many acts of violence as well as of this help and the humanitarian work of the students and the faculty. If there was a newspaper report attributing the remark to me that I did not need Muslim votes, I can only reiterate very strongly that it is entirely false and baseless.

Speaking about what Dr. Sushila Nayar has said recently, I have referred to the atrocities on Muslims, on Harijans and on Adivasis and the hardships they have to suffer. I have also referred to the barbarous shooting in Pantnagar in which the victims belonged to different castes, but my speech also covered economic and foreign policy issues. Would it be fair to Harijans or the Adivasis or the Muslim minority if we were not to refer to these matters? Why are we discussing them here today? Would the Muslims and others be safer if such attacks are hushed up? I have said and I ask again what meaning can democracy have for the man whose house and belongings are destroyed and his loved ones killed and for those whose lands are being snatched away, who are beaten or maimed?... (*Interruptions*).

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I am not excusing any riots which took place at any time, before, now or which may take place later. We have to condemn all riots anywhere, where people have suffered. I have always condemned every riot and every act of barbarism which has taken place anywhere.

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Yes, during emergency also, if there were such acts*.

I am now speaking about the sufferings of the poor people and sufferings of Harijans. Even yesterday when I returned from the House in the evening, I found various groups waiting for me. In fact, I have their applications with me right now. I am not speaking from the hearsay on the basis of newspaper reports but from my personal experience of the many sorrowful groups who come to me. The applications which I have here with me are only representative of something that is happening every day ever since our defeat as the ruling party. It is not that the people did not come before. People did come before also, but today they come and when I say that I am not in a position to do anything, they say: well, somebody has to raise some voice...(*Interruptions*) My speeches in this House are on record and anybody can see what I have said earlier also in this regard. When these people come to me, what I can do is to mention their cases in public to try and rouse the public consciousness and to refer their grievances or get our local people to refer them to the concerned authorities. There is nothing more that I can do. Therefore, to say that this should not be mentioned would be very unrealistic. It is only when public consciousness is roused, that we would be able to achieve our objective; at least the neighbours would feel constrained to prevent such acts in their areas. As we know, today these incidents are on the increase. Unfortunately, when one goes to make a complaint, it is the complainant himself who gets involved in the trouble. Either he is arrested or he gets involved in some police case....(*Interruptions*).

When the hon. Member, Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu, was giving out the information with regard to the number of riots earlier, the hon. Member must have noticed that there was a steady decline in the figures. With regard to the atrocities on Harijans also, according to the newspapers and the various Government reports which I have seen, the figure is now on the increase. When I passed through Calcutta airport, I think, it was some time last year, a leader of a Union came to me and I myself put this question to him. Did you not have this type of difficulty earlier ? He said : We did, but when we went to the authorities, may be they could not deal with two out of our ten grievances, but we always had a hearing and at least some of them were solved, but today nobody is giving us a hearing...(*Interruptions*). I am only repeating what the gentleman told me....(*Interruptions*).

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With regard to democracy I would like to say that democracy can survive only on the basis of socialism which stands for economic justice, and secularism which stands for social justice. (*Interruptions*). It does not help to misrepresent others, nor is it my intention to do so. Other hon. Members ably quoted facts and figures.

If the Jan Sangh and RSS are mentioned, it is certainly not out of any allergy to them, but because of the ideology of Hindu militancy and supremacy, and the mention of Hindu Rashtra which they have been preaching, and of the remarks regarding Little Pakistans within India and so on, which we hear from time to time. (*Interruptions*) Para-military

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* Replying to a Member who asked, "Even during Emergency?"

training to children and young people is not conducive either to communal harmony or to giving a feeling of security to members of other communities. Photographs have appeared and all newspapers and other reports have mentioned children with imitation guns. Naturally, I have no inside information. I know only what has appeared.... (*Interruptions*).

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Consistently the newspapers have mentioned; with regard to Aligarh and certain other matters the names of important people of the local RSS. (*Interruptions*). The names in the FIR read out yesterday were those of one group as far as I know (*Interruptions*). The philosophy of the dominant partner of the ruling Janata Party is responsible for creating an atmosphere of fear and insecurity in the minds of minorities and weaker sections.

It is no use blaming the Administration; unless we know that they have been given firm and clear instructions which they have defied.

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We did not have party members as officials under us at all.* Therefore, what an official did then; or now; he did according to his ideas; and certainly not because the party directed him....(*Interruptions*).

One point which I have always emphasised–I am glad to say that one hon. Member from the ruling party who spoke yesterday also said so–and which I should like to reiterate is the importance, first of trying to prevent tension from coming to the boil and secondly to take the firmest measures if there is any trouble, right in the beginning as soon as trouble appears. From this point of view it was certainly a mistake to lift the curfew and endanger the lives of people as happened in Aligarh from what I can see from newspaper reports. Our policy was not evenly implemented but we did try to take a large number of minority personnel in the police and other services at all levels...(*Interruptions*). Employment opportunities must be given to them in industry also. Whenever there was a new industry established, Muslim minorities and other weaker sections and those who were dislodged by the start of new industrial undertakings should be given jobs there first. It is equally necessary to ensure that every subject in our education programme gives the child the right attitude towards its fellow citizens and other religions, languages and so on. This we have tried with some success. I wonder if the Government is giving full consideration to all the repercussions which might arise out of the Anti-Conversion Bill which is on the anvil. A secular attitude must be an essential requirement for all officials, teachers and others in responsible positions. I entirely agree that questions regarding communal tension, law and order situation and violence are national questions. But some of the issues raised and the manner of mentioning them did not indicate that the ruling party is entirely of this view. I have earlier spoken very strongly about the Jan Sangh; about the R.S.S. Some Members said that no case had been brought out. I think it was mentioned yesterday; again by an hon. Member from that side; not from our side it is not a question of who throws the first

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* Responding to Shri Ram Dhan's remark, "What about Mr. Tandon who was serving under you ?..."

stone. It is very difficult to prove who threw the first stone. The question is what is the atmosphere? An atmosphere of bitterness and hatred is spread through statements. I have mentioned some of these things; Little Pakistan or something like that; or a whispering campaign which inflames hatred. It is this which creates an atmosphere in which any child can be induced to throw a stone or do something like that which can spark off such a situation. Why is it that at other times similar acts do not have repercussions ? Things are normal if a Hindu and a Hindu fight and the matter ends there. But if the same fight is on a very trivial matter between a Hindu and Muslim why should it immediately degenerate and rose such passions ? Some propaganda has been going on which creates this sort of atmosphere. My humble submission is and it is not at all with a view to get any political advantage. I do not think any political advantage is gained out of communal violence...(*Interruptions*). Everybody suffers; the Muslim suffers and the Hindu suffers and if there is any gain at all it must be a very temporary gain....(*Interruptions*).

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The sort of remarks that were made here earlier by people belonging I believe to the Jan Sangh....

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I think you were one of the strongest spokesmen of this so-called group*. (*Interruptions*)...shall I say, a segment of the Janata Party ? They have a very definite view. I have stated with great humility that today, if we are discussing this matter, it is not to blame either the Jan Sangh or the RSS; they have been propagating a point of view which was very dangerous to the unity and integrity of this country. Because if any one group which is unsafe, or even if not actually unsafe, feel that they do not have equal opportunity, and it is obvious now that the Muslim minority does feel this....

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I am not justifying anything. But just because something happened in Andhra Pradesh** you cannot say that Muslims are feeling safe in other places. Something was said about the Parsi Community. It is because they are so small that nobody thinks of them as a threat. They are living in one or two places. But Muslims are spread all over India. When I speak of minorities I think of other minorities also. In different places, other communities are in a minority. There are towns and villages where other people are in a minority.

I would ask the hon. Members on the other side who belong to what used to be 'the Jan Sangh'. They say it is no longer there. Most of us here see, it is very much there and in a most dominant position. The other constituents of the Janata Party should try to wake up to the realities of the situation and the dangers to our country, from their point of view. I am not saying that Jan Sangh should be removed from Government but there must be an

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* Replying to Dr. Subramaniam Swamy's remark, "There is no Jan Sangh; Why don't you get out of that psychosis?"

** Responding to Shri Ram Dhan's remark, "What about Andhra Pradesh."

effort to at least convert them or at least try to show them that their attitude will not be tolerated. If you use R.S.S., for instance, for adult education, then this kind of attitude is spread, it is not curbed and contained. The R.S.S. is called a cultural organisation. Well, culture is a word which covers many things. But culture is equally dangerous if communal feelings are spread. Whether it is culture, politics or education, the main thing is that this kind of attitude must be curbed by the Government; otherwise not only will communalism grow there will be growing violence and it will affect the country in many other ways and undanger our unity and what we have struggled and stood for.

Agony of Violence*

Sir, I share the anguish and agony of mind of the hon. Members who have spoken and I appreciate the offer of co-operation which they have given. It is natural that such occasions should evoke emotion and once there is emotion some things are said which may or may not be desirable otherwise. Nobody wants to excuse what has happened in Moradabad or elsewhere. Nobody, and certainly not I myself, would wish to shift the responsibility to others. But every situation has to be seen in a particular context. Communal disharmony has been growing for some time. I am not going into the causes. I think that anybody who thinks and who has been watching the situation is aware of it.

Much has been made of our slogan that we wanted a Government that works. But a machine can work only if it is in order. If you get a broken down machinery, where the parts are removed and scattered, you cannot make it work immediately. And, I beg to submit, Sir, that that is the state of the machinery which we have inherited. It is no less so with some of the police as with other parts of the administration. So far as the present situation is concerned, it is my view that there may be individual policemen or members of the PAC who are responsible for neglect or wrong action and those who are guilty must certainly suffer the severest possible punishment. There is no doubt about that. There are no two opinions. But to generalise and to blame the entire police force, is not in the interests either of communal harmony or of the nation's security and strength. This is the force that has to protect the people, whether they are of the minority community or of the majority community. If the force feels that it is being removed because it is not trusted, it is bound to get demoralised. Therefore, we must be very careful when we apportion blame like that.

I do not want to mention parties or groups but because one hon. Member has spoken of the flag-hoisting in Delhi, I want to say a few words. In all these years, since India has been free. I have not heard of any occasion, whether during the period of the Congress rule, or the three years of the Janata rule when Jan Sangh members have hoisted the National Flag. If it has happened without my knowledge, I do not know. But I have not heard of it and I have not seen an advertisement of the kind that was brought out this year. Why suddenly has this aspect of patriotism come up on this particular 15th August? I said that it was not within my knowledge. (*Interruptions*).

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* Replying to the questions on the Statement made by the Minister of Home Affairs regarding the incidents of violence at Moradabad, Delhi and some other places, *R.S. Deb.*, 18 August, 1980, cc. 276-78, 281-86, 290.

Sir, I was trying to give information on this particular incident. I do not know if it is fully correct. But what I heard was that when the national flag was unfurled—whoever was doing it—because, Mr. Joshi who was supposed to go, did not go; and the person forgot to fasten it properly and the flag slipped down on its own. But immediatley, some other person ran and raised it again. This is the information I have received from some people, not from official sources, but from some people who said they were there. This is what I was trying to say when hon. Members got so excited. I can understand their excitement and I do not blame them for it.

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Now, Sir, as several hon. Members have said, we have communal bodies in every section of the people. I am not saying that they exist only in one section or community but that some people should be so touchy when they are called 'communal', I suppose is natural and I do not blame them but we have seen certain attitudes which are patently communal. I would be the first person to welcome a real change of heart and a change of attitude, but we do find that when such incidents take place, there are not merely anti-social elements, but also people who have communal inclinations, who even if they do not spark the trouble, help to aggravate it. I am not commenting on this particular incident. The police was probably involved. But there are many other such instances. Anyhow, all these things will come out in the Inquiry which was declared immediately.

The two officers mentioned by hon. Shri Bhupesh Gupta were also ordered to be removed immediately, but the little problem was that somebody had to take their place before they could go. That is why there was some delay in their going. But I was a party to that decision of the National Integration Council and I still think that it was the right decision that whoever is on the spot has to take the responsibility. He has to be removed. If it is later proved that he was not to blame he should not suffer.

What Mr. Shahi said is very correct that whatever happens, it is the poorest people who suffer. Sometimes, in any firing innocent people do get fired upon, but always it is the very poor who suffer the most. You may say that I am digressing, but let us take the Baghpat incident. I am not referring to the agitational part of it, the effect of the agitation. A large number of Harijans have come from there. They are not concerned with what is happening, all that they are concerned with is that they have lost lives, they are not able to go about their daily affairs, either normal functioning or of earning. Apart from the loss of lives, which is very sad, all agitations hit the poor in a way from which they cannot recover for a long time. It will take time to resettle a person who has lost everything, who has put all his savings in a cart or a small shop, and that has gone. That is an impossible task for any Government to undertake.

So far as listening to outside radios is concerned, I should like to add to what the hon. Member has said. All communities listen to whatever station they can get. I hope the hon. Member was not referring to any particular community. Sometimes such remarks when they are not put in context, can lead to misunderstanding and heart-burning. It depends on what type of radio you have, how many bands your radio has. Most people try to get varied news and other programmes which their instrument is capable of receiving.

This is not the time to mention Kashmir, but we are indeed sad at the behaviour of the Jamat-i-Tulaba is creating a very difficult situation for the local Government and indeed for all law-abiding and patriotic people there.

There are situations in other States which I do not want to go into. When we talk of these situations—I do not think Moradabad had necessarily grown out of this—we see that there is an atmosphere in the whole country which is one of violence and crime. That has not come about overnight, it has been growing. As I have said on earlier occasions, part of it is due to the world situation. Everywhere violence and crime is on the increase. But in other countries, they have arrived at a level of development where if they want to kill or die, it is their business. In India it affects the vast majority of our people in the way that hurts them the most. Apart from violence and the person who dies, it affects all development programmes, all programmes for progress, all programmes for forward movement and it weakens the Government's ability to protect those who are most in need of protection, such as the minorities or the Harijans. It is only if the nation is strong in every way that there can be protection for all; otherwise it can not be full protection, with all our good intentions.

How those animals came to Idgah there, I do not know. I do not know whether the enquiry will be able to prove it, but I can give my experience. When I go on tour, quite often an animal gets on to the road, or parth. And although I am surrounded by security people, it is not always possible to drive it away. It gets in between the legs of police and so on, whether it is a dog, or a goat or a pig or any other small animal. This has been my personal experience not on one but on numerous occasions. I am not saying whether somebody did or did not do it deliberately. What I am saying is, let us look at these matters calmly and in a way so that in future such things can be prevented. Certainly, the enquiry has to be thorough and effective and the action should be strong. But let us take this opportunity to see how we can improve the situation in the future. I have myself said times without number that what we need is a thorough revamping of the administration, of the thinking and training of the police. But somehow when we start to take steps, then there is also an uproar. Any change is resented. The pace of change and development make the task very much difficult for a country like ours. I would personally welcome and I have asked for the cooperation of all not once but on many occasions.

About the National Integration Council I am sorry there has been delay. All the papers are ready, the names are ready. But it has become a very unwildy body, although we are having it because we promised to do so. I do not know whether as a body it can be terribly effective. We do want to implement the decisions that we take and also to review those decisions in the light of later developments.

I want once more to express my deep sympathy for all those who have suffered—whether in Moradabad or other parts of the country—and I pledge to all the people of India—and especially to the minorities and the Harijans—that we are deeply concerned about their safety of life, of limb, of property and the safety of their rights. They should feel secure and have a feeling that they have a rightful place in this country which is theirs as much as anybody else's. They have fought for freedom, they have shed their blood;

even in the wars after freedom, they have fought against Pakistan. They have fought bravely; they have won the highest medal and awards that they could win. I am not referring to the Muslims alone, but to all other minorities. They have shared the sacrifices and they have an equal right to anything which this nation can build in the future. But we can build only if we view things calmly and away from the emotional aspect, if we try to face facts.

Communal attitudes have been held by some people. It is no use getting touchy about it. If they have changed, let them not do it in future. We shall give full support if people give up those attitudes. Once again, I thank the hon. Members for their cooperation.

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Sir, I have left out an important point on which I shall take only one minute. Reference was made to foreign money and I believe some countries were mentioned. I think this is most unfortunate, Sir. Money does come from abroad. It comes to certain educational institutions. For instance, in Moradabad there is an Indo-Arab institute. But it would not be right or fair to confuse this with the present incidents because such allegations will only create misunderstandings amongst our friends and affect international relationships.

Communalism*

Actually, the turn was that of another Member from the Opposition. But since I have a message from the Rajya Sabha that they would like me there—I have asked permission from the Speaker to say a few words.

Sir, I appreciate the words which you said at the beginning before this Motion was moved, and the manner in which you urged restraint on us all.

It is true that we in the Government were not happy about having this debate on the very first day, and the reason was not that we wanted to avoid it; in fact, we very clearly said that we did not wish to avoid it, but we felt that since there was going to be a bundh, and since there was the other move on the part of the Akali Dal, anything said here might be misunderstood and have adverse repercussions.

This was our only reason for wanting a postponement. So far as the date is concerned, who chose it ? I certainly did not. I was informed by you; and so far as I know, it was the hon. Members opposite who chose the date, to which our Ministers agreed. It is not my intention to reply to all the points raised. The reply will be given by my colleague, the Home Minister. But since my name has been brought into the debate time and again—and I must confess that some Members have not spoken in consonance with the advice which you have given—I should like to take up some points.

Shri Vajpayee has gone into some detail. His words are always eloquent. I am a little afraid of eloquence; I am a very plain-speaking straight forward person; and I have noticed how eloquence of this kind quite often hides other ideas. If you can discern those other thoughts under his eloquence.

Much of what he said had a veneer of truth, yet was a little bit away from the truth (*Interruptions*). Well, no, I won't say half truth....(*Interruptions*).

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I am trying to do that**. I don't want to go into all the details. For instance, mention was made of the religious demands. Whatever I said about these religious demands later

* Participating in the debate on the Adjournment Motion regarding the situation in Punjab leading to communal violence and confrontation between CRPF and a section of the people both in Punjab and Haryana, *L.S. Deb.*, 28 February, 1984, cc. 580-94.

** Replying to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's remarks, "Anyway you put the record straight" and "You tell us about details".

on, had been told to the Akali leadership and the Sants. When the Sants were here, I told them quite clearly what we could agree to. I have not moved from that position: but they have moved from their position. They changed their view on the timings they wanted for the transmission. There are various other changes. I don't think I should go into all those minute details. I repeat that I had clarified how much we could agree to and why we could not agree to the other demands. For instance, why we could not allow a transmitter; why we could not give the longer timing of the 3 hours for the transmission. Originally I thought they had agreed to between half an hour and one hour. Later the Akalis asked for increased time. So, in order to be conciliatory, we agreed to $1^1/_2$ hours plus half, that is $1^1/_2$ hours in the morning and half in the evening. In this manner, at every step, we tried to meet what they said. You asked, "why was this announced in the Gurdwara?" I did not think I was making an announcement; I thought my announcement had already been made to the Akali leadership. It was not formally written down, nor do I think that we could make such an official announcement until it was fully accepted, and we had some reason to believe that things would not go beyond. Actually they did go beyond. What I said in the Gurdwara was what I had told the Akali leadership, what I have since said at many public meetings. Nothing that I am now saying is new; it has all been said in public and in private on a number of occasions.

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If we had agreed to transmission of the Gurbani, why did we not go ahead with it ? Because the laying of transmission wires was not allowed. We had even appointed people for the work. But this needs cooperation from the other side concerned; and this is the case in other matters also.

So far as not selling tobacco or meat is concerned, this has nothing to do with the Central Government. It is concerned with municipal laws. We told the Akalis to take the matter up with the municipal authorities and that if it came to us in any form we would support it. In this issue also there was some variation as to whether it should be the same area as in Hardwar and Varanasi or whether it should cover the whole city. I am giving, these as examples. What was in our hands to accept, we accepted though with some slight modification where we thought that it was not good for the country or it could have other repercussions. If you are going to have a three-hour transmission from one Gurdwara how can you say that you will not have if from other Gurdwaras, from temples, from mosques and churches? You simply cannot. That would mean not having any other programmes.

These are some of the reasons. Some Opposition Members have differed. I do not want to name the Parties, I think all of you know who said what. Initially several political parties and their own reasons and their own objections to one or other of the demands. Some agreed to some demands, some did not agree to those but agreed to others and so on.

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The Congress?* So far as the Central Government is concerned, there was no ambiguity. I made it clear when I met the Akalis long before the tripartite came into the picture. Some

* Replying to Prof. Madhu Dandavate's question, "Does it include Congress (I)" ?

matters which were mentioned here were told to them before the tripartite talks, before you talked to them formally; privately you may have talked to them but before you talked to them formally, these things were made clear. It is after we thought that we had disposed of the whole matter, only the religious demands were before me, here in this Parliament House in Room No. 9, when I thought that the meeting was over and I got up to say 'Namaskar' because of other previous engagements, then they said, "No, no, that is not the main thing; the main questions are of the river waters and territory". Until then there was no mention of river waters or territory.

With regard to the All India Gurdwara Act, we said, "we have only one objection which is that the other Gurdwaras are in different States. They have their own elected boards or committees and we feel that all concerned should be consulted."

I am sorry to say that I do not remember the number of Gurdwaras. Perhaps the Home Minister may know but it has kept changing. First it was a large number. Then it came down. Now the latest figure varies from 10 to 30.

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Our point was that local consent was necessary*. If they agreed, there was no quarrel. I have only met the Sants twice. It was in 1981, if I am not mistaken. I put my point of view before them on those occasions. I have not moved from my stand.

Now with regard to river waters, I was a little unhappy about the way things were going. It is not a good precedent, it is not a good tendency to go back on awards. The Shah Commission gave some ruling. Then there were other awards. What is the proof, what is the guarantee, who will give the guarantee, that if we now come to a new agreement, it will be considered binding, final and enduring? This was the only question and the only hesitation in my mind. However, when they stressed that this was very important, I agreed that the water dispute could be referred to a tribunal.

The Speaker has already chided one of our Members for mentioning that there were three years in which all this could have been sorted out. I am not repeating the story. But it is a fact which must be kept in mind. That was the time to sort it out when all the surrounding States were also allies of the Janata Party Central Government. When the Akalis were in the Central Government and they had their own Government in Punjab. Obviously if that period of three years was not long enough to settle it, I think, it is very unfair to say that these two years are too long a period. We have not rested—we have had bilateral and tripartite meetings. In between we got messages from people who acted as mediators. Some messages said that the Akalis would prefer to have bilateral rather than tripartite talks. We had all kinds of people going back and forth. I even meet some people whom I would not normally have seen, who were on the extremist side, only because of my deep desire for a

* Replying to Prof. Madhu Dandavate's remark, "They made it clear that they would insist only in the case of the historic Gurudwaras and that too with local consent".

solution, to come nearer to an understanding. But all the same, the situation kept on continuously changing in some way or the other. What were the pressure? Somebody has asked. Who was not for an agreement? Obviously it is those who are more extreme. These extremists have always been there. They may not be the same extremists who are now shooting people. There were extremists within themselves. But once the extremists asserted themselves, it was not possible for the moderates to come to an agreement, however much they wished it. This was my assessment after talking with the Akalis that even though some were in favour of an agreement, there would be pressure on them. There is no pressure on us. We knew how far we can go. Now as regards some issues, they concerned other States as well. We told the Akali leadership that if they could get together with the Haryana people, with the opposition parties there and with our party and sort out the matter, we would agree. But there exist more than one party. Somebody had quoted what one of our party Members has said. It is true. We do not have the kind of monolithic rigidity as you have in your party. We do not want to have that kind of rigidity. But I must confess that this creates problems for us. I am not saying that it is an easy way. Everybody has his own view. Everybody expresses his own view. And unfortunately, when it is a question between State and State, then most people divide not according to their party but according to the States. We have seen this in many other States, whether it is a communal problem or whether it is a language problem.

I think somebody spoke about the police standing by. It is true that to some extent this has happened. It has happened in Haryana, it has happened in Punjab, it has happened in West Bengal and Assam and perhaps in other States. We are not happy about it. I am not saying this to blame the Opposition or to pick a quarrel with them. These are facts of life which we have to keep in view and which we must try to sort out together. We must try to build that kind of spirit of secularism. Not all the people who are in the Opposition are secular—I am sorry to say that. And I think you know it. I am not going into that.

I am grateful that Chaudhary Charan Singh—was less vitriolic than his usual self in his words. He blamed our Government in Kerala for taking the cooperation of the Muslim League. The first coalition was with the Marxists. But so far as the BLD, as it was then called, is concerned—I am told by my Muslim friends—they entered into a poll alliance with the Muslim Majlis to fight the UP Assembly elections in 1974. In 1977 the Muslim Majlis continued as members of the alliance and in the Janata Party they were treated as belonging to the Lok Dal faction. In the BLD quota I have the names of those who were there, but I do not think we need go into that in 1979 when Chaudhary Saheb formed his government, he secured the official support of the Muslim League, and the President of the Muslim Majlis was taken as Communications Minister. I am not blaming anyone. I am just quoting these facts because of the attempt to project a different picture. In 1980 also both in the Parliament elections and later on in the U.P. elections, they fought together. So, this is how you can be eloquent you can sound very right but when one digs below the surface, one finds that facts are quite different.

It is quite true that I have said that we would not force Hindi on the southern States. Why? Not because I do not love Hindi or I do not want the country to have one language;

I think this is important for the whole of India. I believe strongly in the three-language formula. I think it is important to have Hindi as a national link language. I think it is important to have English as an international like language. In today's world we cannot get on without it, but it should not in any way denigrate the importance of Hindi. This is what we believe in and we have continuously tried to propagate. But what is the situation? The South feels strongly and you know what happened when there was a movement for Hindi in the North, and what the reaction was in the South? I went down there are talked to the students. When I arrived there, they were saying : 'Down, down, Hindi'. I said why don't we all meet together and say up, up Tamil, why say 'down' to anything? Let us have Tamil in your State but I would like you to learn Hindi also. Every time I have been to the South I have stressed this aspect. I am glad to say that a lot of people are learning Hindi even in Tamil Nadu. But they will not learn Hindi if they think that you are forcing it down their throats. This is the point. They will learn it if they think it is useful to them, they will learn it if you have the proper books in Hindi that are worth reading. I do not mean that Hindi literature is not worth reading but I do mean that books on science, books on various modern subjects which are necessary today are not appearing in Hindi or in our regional languages. This is our great difficulty in promoting these languages. We have been giving them every encouragement but instead of just raising such slogans to have more Hindi, I wish people would interest themselves in getting original writings on these contemporary subjects, getting translations of modern books which come out. In Europe if a book comes out in any one language, within a month or so, it is translated in all other European languages. This is how those languages grow. They are not dependent on the other languages but we are dependent so far as various sophisticated subjects are concerned.

It is true that some people advised our entering the Gurdwara. I am not going to take names. I do not want to start a quarrel nor do I say that it is the entire Opposition but there are individuals in the Opposition who have been saying that we should enter the Gurdwara. I am entirely with the House that no place should be made a sanctuary for those who are wanted for any crime. No place should be allowed to collect arms. But in taking any action we have to calculate the repercussions. Will they be such as would destroy our very aim ? That is why at every step we have to go a little slowly. You are blaming me for delaying matters but I can assure you that I have not delayed. There have hardly been a day in these years when I have not been in touch through somebody, when I have not been getting messages, sending messages, meeting people of the Opposition and trying to find some way out. We have done our best to resolve these issues in an amicable and constructive spirit.

I have not got up today, or at any time, to blame and party. My quarrel is not with any political party. It is not with the Akali leadership. When we fought the British, we did not fight the British as a people; we fought imperialism. We make that distinction continuouly.

Today our fight is with this type of extremism, this type of chauvinistic thinking, this type of sectarianism. It does not matter who practices it. It is somebody in my party, certainly that person will be punished. If it is somebody in another party, he also should be dealt with.

When I saw a particular leader of the Opposition, I told him of the posters which his party had brought out and pointed out that they were not conducive to communal harmony. That is why we were worried that there might be trouble and people might get excited. But fortunately, good arrangements were made, people also cooperated and the day passed off peacefully.

But I should like to ask the House, is it a good custom to have bandhs in this manner, whether it is the Government's or the Opposition ? I am not going into this argument here....

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This is a question on which we can sit and come to an understanding. It is not we who started this business of bandhs. One can at least understand an opposition party having a bandh. But I am not able to understand how the Government can have a bandh against its Government....

I think the main purpose of this discussion was to condemn some of these unfortunate happenings. I add my voice to such condemnation. I think we all feel very strongly. I have spoken of how criminals are sheltered, the arms collection, the killings, putting people on the 'hit list' and shooting absolutely innocent people one by one. It is rightly pointed our that even in the Punjab most of the people killed, I think were Sikhs.

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I stand corrected*. But a number of them were Nirankaris and others. Now take the latest murder of a young man. He did not have a beard and that was the only reason. I do not know him at all. I only know what I have red in the papers and what I have been told.

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His real brother was with him and he had a turban and a beard.** We condemn all such things.

We equally condemn what has happened in Harayana. It is a matter of shame that any mob should work itself into this kind of frenzy and indulge in such acts. I agree that it is no excuse to say that it was a reaction.

It may have been a reaction, but now we must move out of these attitudes where we have such reactions. This is where we seek the cooperation of all the Opposition. If they want to blame me, Sir, let them. I have faced blame and Opposition since I was three or four years old, from the time of our freedom struggle.

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You were not there but I was.*** And I have faced it not from you at that time but from others, like you. Whatever it is, I am only saying that I am used to it. It does not

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* Replying to Mr. Speaker's remark, "No".

** Agreed to the remark made by Mr. Speaker "His real brother was with him".

*** Replying to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee who intervened to say "We were not there then".

bother me. But it does bother me when in a moment of such grave crisis you are more concerned with blaming rather than with finding a way out. This is what is worrying me.

On the very first day, this House has expressed its deep sympathy and condolences with the families of these who have lost their lives. I think we should once again express those sentiments. Our hearts are also with all those who have suffered in other ways whether because their religious symbols have been desecrated or for whatever reason. Perhaps in other parts of the world such matters do not have much meaning, but for Indians they do. So, regardless of which religion we belong to or do not belong to, we should be understanding and sympathetic towards the religious feelings of others. Therefore, to them also we express our deepest sympathy. Let us join in a strong desire to work for a society where this sort of a thing does not happen. Sir, we need to take this whole problem above the political plan . But unfortunately politics has come into it.

Somebody has said we should have a broader base. In an election, some win and some lose. If the person who loses says that he will not wait until the next election but must have some Government post immediately, then our type of democracy cannot last. This matter has to be considered (*Interruptions*). No, a Presidential system will not solve the problem because elections to Parliament will remain and should remain.

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The police slipped up*. For myself I can assure the House that we had ordered his arrest. I don't know when and why he came to Delhi. We hoped he would be arrested in Bombay. That is where the warrant had been issued.

Sir, I don't want to take more time of the House, but I should like to repeat that the real point which we have to stress is how to keep vigilant. I know the Opposition Members sometimes get irritated when I talk of the wider aspects.

But I don't believe that these problems in India are isolated incidents. Some aspects are local, some are national and some are international. But any kind of divisive atmosphere gives opportunity for outside interference. I have no doubt that such interference does take place, such provocation does take place. I have earlier said that this is so not only within India. I do not feel that there are elements which do not want this sub-continent to cooperate and to speak with one voice on various problems. So it does not. There powerful elements whom it does not suit that we should be strong. By 'we' I mean not only India, but our region. You can see it in global economic policies and in the many pressures that are put on developing countries. India is not unique in this. India is not the only one which suffers. But India can stand up because we are big. We can stand up because we have a tradition; we can stand up because the whole nature of our freedom fight was such that we still have the flame of freedom in us. It is not so easy for smaller countries. That is the reason why the people look to us. It is not some thing for us to be proud of or to boast about. We consider other developing countries as our partners and I hope they consider us as their

* Responding to Smt. Pramila Dandavate's question, "Why is Bhindrawale not arrested?" and the further query, "Why did he come to Delhi ?"

partners. But they know that we can speak up on various issues where they themselves could get into great trouble. These are the wide questions we face. In trying to always brink the debate down to a low level, I do not think we are serving our country or our people.

Once again my plea is that no matter what our differences–we obviously will always have them, we would not be sitting on opposite sides, if we did not have them, many of you who are sitting together also have differences. They may not surface now, but nevertheless we know that they are there and you know that they are there–but the question is that in spite of these differences, we should see on what items can we get together, on what times can we show to the world that we are united.

Prof. Dandavate said something about the British Parliament sitting during the war and our Parliament during the Bangladesh war. There is a big difference. At that time we were united against an outside force; this time there may be an invisible outside force, but we are not in a war. Here the fight, the quarrel is amongst ourselves and once a quarrel takes on this kind of communal overtones, we know from experience how a little word can be misinterpreted and spark off a fire. I have seen communal riots sparking not today, but way back in the thirties in the U.P. Two boys on bicycles collide. If they are both Hindus, nothing happens; if they are both Muslims, nothing happens. But if one happens to be a Hindu and one happens to a Muslim in no time trouble can start. When you have this atmosphere, then you have to be much more careful than in any other situation. I do not know whether all of us have a communal streak. Sometimes it seems the secularism is only skin-deep with some of us. Unless we combine to root out this evil from our country, we shall not be able to go ahead in any direction and this Parliament will not be serving its real duty. As somebody said, we are here, each of us is elected from one constituency, but once we come to Parliament we represent the nation, we do not merely represent one region or constituency. So it is with this attitude that we should function.

Sir I have taken much of your time, I meant to speak only for a few minutes but I do feel very strong on this issue, I have spoken up on communalism before. I think that many of my own personal troubles have arisen because of this forthrightness. For a long time I have been the target of attack, but I shall continue to speak up because this is the biggest divisive factor in our country and if the country is divided, then the country cannot be strong and if the country is not strong, obviously we cannot guard our freedom or anything else.

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SOCIAL WELFARE AND PROTECTION OF WEAKER SECTIONS

Atrocities on Harijans*

Sir, I rise with a very heavy heart to express my sense of shock, sorrow and, if I may say so, shame on these barbarous atrocities which have taken place, and even more, that we should be so lacking in social consciousness after all these years that such incidents are happening all over the country.

It is, as one hon. Member has said, a national shame and I think we should not utilise this occasion to speak about one aspect or another. We do all of us share this shame and the only way in which we can wipe it out is at least now, instead of blaming one another, to try and see how we can work together to change attitudes, and to try and create a better atmosphere for our brothers and sisters who are Harijans, who are tribals and who are in the minorities.

Prof. Mukerjee said that we are burdened with the weight of thousands of years, but the weight is increased perhaps a hundredfold, on those who are not merely small minorities but vast number under-privileged, who have had not only the burden of history but the burden of being oppressed by their own brothers for these thousands of years. It is up to us to see how we can lighten the burden. It is not an easy task because of the numbers involved and even more so, because of the habits of thought and of living. It needs a revolution, a revolution in thinking, and it needs tremendous courage, intellectual courage, moral courage and even physical courage in order to tackle this tremendous problem. And it is a problem which we cannot tackle merely by giving jobs. That is important; I will not deny the importance of it. It is important to give equality of opportunity, but it is in our daily handling of these situations, in the way in which we behave towards these people, that the change has to come, and it is only when that change comes that the other things will also be possible.

We have to get together to fight all such feelings of class of caste and of communalism. We must also get together to refrain from making provocative statements or speeches. We must get together to calm emotions when they arise. Mrs. Pandit mentioned about the fear in some communities in Allahabad. I have myself seen such fear in the eyes of the citizens, and as rightly pointed out, fear is the most dangerous of emotions. When one is afraid, one is not in control of oneself. Therefore, we must see that conditions are not created in which any community has a feeling of insecurity. These are the two greatest dangers.

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* Participating in the discussion on the Statement made by the Home Minister regarding 'Incidents relating to Harijans', *L.S. Deb.*, 4 April, 1968, cc. 2406-08.

We have talked a great deal today in the debate on the Ministry of External Affairs on Pakistan and China. I believe that we are fully able to meet those dangers, but if this danger within our country is not met, then we can fall prey to outside enemies. Today it is urgent that we work together to create equal opportunities for all our citizens, specially those who are underprivileged and that we work to strengthen the fundamental unity of our people. I cannot find words which are adequate to condemn these barbarous and heinous crimes. I cannot comprehend the callousness, the insensitivity and the inhumanity of those who just watched a young boy being burnt to death. But, as I said earlier, it is not enough to blame these people. We have to blame the whole social system. It is not enough to blame the social system, unless we are prepared to take action to change that system and to create some hope of the basic human values to our people. Certainly those who are guilty must be punished and punished harshly. These are cases in which there should be no question of any kind of pity. But I would appeal to the House and to the country as a whole–let us get together and evolve ways of functioning in which we can take the necessary steps–economic, political and social steps–to create the necessary foundation on which a new life can be built and the equality and other basic rights, which are the dues of all our people, can be given to them.

Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes*

I am glad that this debate has taken place and also that we were able to extend the time for it so that many more of our friends could express their views. It is a subject of very special concern to us all, because we know that so much still has to be done to remove the social disabilities from which our brothers and sisters of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes are suffering.

There are many reasons for this, but the most patent reason is our traditional attitudes which have been ingrained over many centuries, and which we must now all endeavour to change. There is much that the Government can do and which the Government are trying to do, but we must understand that this change simply cannot happen merely by governmental order. What we need is a major social upheaval. We believe that all such changes and upheavals must be through the consent of the people and through peaceful means. That is why I welcome this debate, because to have the co-operation of the different parties in creating the right atmosphere in our villages and cities is a very important part of this whole campaign, and it should be taken up as a programme which is of national importance to all political parties, to all non-political people and to all individuals. But we all know that social changes especially of such nature, of habits which have become a part of many people's daily lives will be slow to achieve and also painful to achieve.

The legislative framework and political institutions we have provided can only influence the pace and direction of change, but by themselves they cannot consummate. That is something for us to take up outside this House. We must bend all our energies to accelerate the progress and suggest every possible kind of improvement in our existing approach and take all necessary steps. At the same time we must not allow this legitimate anxiety to cloud the significant progress which has already been made. The progress is significant in relation to what the situation was when we began. It is not significant if you consider what the situation should be. I am using the word 'significant' in that context.

The advance in education has been considerable. We know, it is not enough. I fully appreciate the remarks made by the hon. Member** who spoke before me, that there are still many difficulties which boys from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes still find in getting jobs, and even in getting the right kind of education. I think that apart from

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* Replying to the debate on a Motion regarding the *Reports* of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and the Committee on Untouchability, *L.S. Deb.*, 4 September, 1970, cc. 67–72.

** Dr. Sankata Prasad.

ensuring that they get education; we must also ensure that those who are the most talented should have special opportunities, whether of tuition or of special training or whatever will help them to attain the standard, because I believe that if any of them are below standard, it is not because of any inherent weakness, but because their talents and capabilities have not been given the opportunity to blossom. That opportunity we must do our best to provide.

I spoke of advance in education. As the House perhaps knows, over 91 lakh pre-matric scholarships have been given to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe members and about 12 lakh post-matric scholarships have been given.

This year 1.88 lakh post-matric scholarships will be given. There has been criticism in this debate of the rate of post-matric scholarships and that this has not been increased and also that the upper limit of the means test for Scheduled Castes has not been raised. Hon. Members know that there is no means test for the Scheduled Tribes. The value of scholarships for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes compares favourably with the rate of the Education Ministry's national merit scholarship scheme. Thus those students who receive the scholarships are equated with meritorious students from the general population. It is only because financial resources are so limited that it seems preferable to give scholarships to as many students as possible rather than to restrict the number of scholarships because of an increase in their value.

There has been a matter of great shame to us all. I refer to the atrocities that take place from time to time. I do not know whether they were taking place before and it is only that more of them come to notice now; I do not know whether even now all of them come to notice. But whatever it is, the situation is a shameful one. It is one in which the Government should take every precaution to see that such things do not happen, and if they do, to take the strictest measures to see that those who are guilty receive strict and severe punishment.

Perhaps hon. Members will remember that when we took up the question of communal harmony in the National Integration Council, we included the question of the Harijans and the Scheduled Tribes along with it; that is, that all the measures that were to be taken for communal harmony should extend to this section also with regard to discrimination against any member of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, not only with regard to jobs and so on but also with regard to security of life and belongings.

A suggestion has been made about the imposition of fines. This question has been discussed with regard to the communal situation. Opinion is very much divided. Certainly the question can be considered and the suggestion should be considered.

We know that the bulk of the landless are from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and that is why it is important that we should expedite all our measures for land reform. But I would like to say only one thing to my hon. friends that sometimes in their desire to have land, they cast an eye on our forests, and, much as I should like the landless to have land, it is very important for the country also to have a certain amount of forest land, and we must keep this in view. In the distribution of land, this aspect should be kept in view that a minimum amount of forest which is necessary should be left for trees and

wild life otherwise our rainfall and climate will be affected and ultimately the population also be affected.

This problem is not merely one that concerns the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. It is a problem which concerns the entire nation and all communities.

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Housing is extremely important. We have taken up this also, and I hope something can be done in this matter. We are trying, we are looking into the matter of house sites. I do not know whether everybody can be provided, but certainly a beginning can be, and should be, made in this respect....

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It is not fair to make allegations against any particular person.* I feel that this is a matter not only of concern and of deep regret, but I have no hesitation in saying that such attacks are deplorable and shameful, and it is the duty of the Government, the State Governments, the Central Government and also all political parties and all the residents of each of the areas where such things take place, to be vigilant to see that such feelings do not grow, and where they find some such feeling, whether due to caste or other reasons, they must immediately draw the attention of the authorities, and we on our part, should see that the police and also the people are ever vigilant, and that they also feel involved and care about these matters. I do not want to make a general remark or to blame anybody, but it is true that when caste feelings exist in society, they also infiltrate in some of the people who are in charge. It should be our endeavour and our duty, to see that such feelings are wiped out from the minds of Indian citizens. Only then can we enable all the Indian people to enjoy the rights and privileges which freedom has given them.

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I am only making a brief intervention to express my concern in this matter. The Minister will deal with all the specific points which are being raised. I should only like to take this opportunity to pledge once again my unceasing attention and effort for this important cause to see that we achieve our ideal of equality in our country.

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* Responding to Shri Sheo Narain's remark, "What did Thimma Reddy say in Andhra...."

Rehabilitation of Disabled Servicemen and War Widows*

During the last few difficult days, the thoughts of the nation have been with the gallant officers and men of our Army, Navy, Air Force and the Border Security Force. Soon the lights will go up in our cities but in many hearts darkness will remain. However proud a nation or a family is of sacrificing its best for the country, this sentiment cannot help the widow in grappling with the problems of daily life, or the children who are bereft of a father's guiding hand. For brave young men, straight and strong in body, to be suddenly without a limb, is not only a matter of physical pain but of mental shock and agony. None of these want pity or charity. What they need is compassionate understanding, and assistance to re-adjust themselves to the sudden and unforeseen change in their lives. We must assure them that life still has much to offer them and they in turn have much to offer society.

I have been deeply concerned with this question since 1962 when I became Chairman of the Citizens' Central Council. Then and again in 1965, I visited almost every military hospital along our borders and also our rehabilitation centres. I have been haunted by the thought that we have not done enough.

The lives of martyrs cannot be valued in terms of money. Their sacrifice is beyond recompense. But a grateful nation remembers its debt, and its obligation to them to mitigate the sufferings of their wives and children. Government have now decided to rectify, in so far as possible, the deficiencies in our programmes for the war disabled and the families of those who have died fighting.

Since our aim has been to give special help to the weakest in our society, at this moment we should not forget the other physically handicapped and disabled. They also need our help. They can, and should, become useful workers in various fields. Many of them show special aptitude for certain vocations which compensate for their handicap.

For all these handicapped, the problem is one of providing the appropriate training and opportunity. Hence, we propose to bring a Bill before Parliament to make it obligatory for all employers who employ more than 25 people in the public as well as the private sector to reserve a certain proportion of their vacancies for the physically handicapped. Many industrialists and employers have already assured me that they have begun to do this and will pursue the matter further. I hope that even those employers who are not covered by this enactment will come forward voluntarily to follow this law.

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* Statement regarding facilities for disabled servicemen and war widows, *L.S. Deb.*, 18 December, 1971, cc. 14-17.

The public sector undertakings are required to reserve vacancies for ex-servicemen including the disabled. However, it is true that the position regarding actual employment is not satisfactory. Government have, therefore, decided to issue a directive to all undertakings, where necessary by amending their Articles of Association, to fill vacancies on the same basis as Government departments. Such a directive would enlarge the reservations for disabled servicemen.

Coming to employment under Government, there are already orders for the rehabilitation of disabled officers of the defence forces in civil posts—classes I and II—by relaxation of age limits, medical standards etc. Effective implementation of these facilities will be ensured. As regards disabled ex-servicemen, preference will be given to them in the 10 per cent and 20 per cent vacancies reserved for ex-servicemen generally in classes III and IV posts respectively. In addition, in certain circumstances vacancies up to another 7 per cent will be made available only to disabled ex-servicemen.

In the unreserved quota of vacancies in both these classes disabled servicemen already get some preference. It has now been decided to give them first priority along with retrenched government employees. It has also been decided that upto 2 members of the family of a serviceman killed in action will be given priority for employment immediately after the retrenched government employees and disabled servicemen. They will be exempted from going through the employment exchange.

We realize that merely expanding the employment opportunities will not be enough. It will be equally necessary to assist the disabled ex-servicemen to take full advantage of these opportunities. Government propose to arrange a variety of training courses.

The widows of our fighting men need special consideration. We intend to start schemes to train them in skills particularly suited to their requirements. The details are being worked out by a small group.

Government have also decided to meet the full cost of education up to the end of the first degree course of the dependents of all personnel of the defence and para military forces killed or permanently disabled during the current hostilities. Government will also meet the full cost of such dependents who are at present undergoing post-graduate courses.

We can enact laws, but it is the outlook of the public which makes all the difference. Public behaviour towards the handicapped should not be affected by old prejudices. On the contrary, we must all help to make them self-reliant again. No longer need such a handicap prevent a person leading a full life.

I am glad that actuated by the same considerations as the Union Government, several State Governments have taken up schemes to assist servicemen and their families through land allocation, cash grants, educational stipends etc. I hope that this governmental effort will be reinforced by the widest measure of popular support.

Atrocities on Adivasis*

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I can very well understand the deep and grave concern of all parties at the grim tragedy that has taken place. No words are adequate to describe one's sorrow.

It is not only this incident but, as the hon. Member** who spoke just now reminded us, it is indeed distressing that such things should continue to happen in our country. I am fully with the House in their desire that everything possible must be done to see that such incidents do not recur.

My hon. friend, Shri Kartik Oraon, said that the Prime Minister is too high a person. Nobody is too high a person to deal with questions of injustice or of the sort of a crime that has taken place. This is a State subject and accordingly it is not easy for the Centre to interfere with these matters. However, some Members of the Opposition have written to me about it and I have replied saying that I will discuss with them what can be done in similar situations.

So far as this particular incident is concerned, Shri Mohsin*** will naturally reply. I only want to say that an inquiry is proceeding. So far as I know, it is going on all-right. There is no complaint now. There were many complaints in the beginning. It is going on all right now. We are keeping in very close touch and, should it become necessary, the Centre can step in also. This type of crime must be condemned in the strongest possible words.

There are certain social attitudes still about which I have spoken many times in the House and which we need to change. There are actions which the Government can undertake but there is a great deal that we can do in order to arouse public opinion also. As the last speaker was saying, it is true that those who are strong do get away with such wrong doings. It is only by creating a strong public opinion supported by governmental action that such matters can be dealt with.

This is all I wanted to say. I thought I would associate myself with the sentiments of deep sorrow and regret at this incident.

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* While participating in a discussion on the reported killings of 14 Santhals and injuries to 36 Santhals by land owners in Purnea District of Bihar on 22 November, 1971, *L.S. Deb.*, 23 December, 1971, cc. 83-84.

** Shri Sakti Kumar Sarkar.

*** The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Protection and Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes*

†This discussion has been going on for the last one or two days. I have listened to some of the speeches in my room. Hon. Members have expressed their anxiety over the slow progress of the programmes pertaining to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. It is not that nothing has been done in this regard. A lot has been done. No doubt, the progress has been very slow as compared to what was needed to be achieved, or what we expected.

Some harsh words have also been spoken. I can understand the feelings of the hon. Members. I also share their concern. This is not a new issue. It is an old one. It is not only an old but a serious and complicated problem. It is a problem of vast magnitude too. The hon. Member has very humbly asked me to do it . It is easy to say so. No doubt, the Government can do a lot but the Government or anybody else cannot change the attitude of the people. How to face this situation or how to bring about this change is a national problem? This is not a one way traffic. This is not a question of any party or the Government. This is a national problem.

We just now listened to a speech in which the hon. Member** pointed out as to how religious fundamentalism, or embracing of other religion, is affecting many people. Something in this direction can be done only if we all sit together and treat it as a national problem.

Efforts in this direction are not new. The Congress party has been striving for it from the very beginning. Even then people's attitude has not changed. It implies that our efforts were not sufficient. We were lacking in our efforts. Thus all of us have to strive hard for changing this attitude in villages, cities, offices as well as in the society as a whole.

The most painful aspect of the problem is that every now and then news regarding burning of houses, injustice or atrocities are reported in the newspapers. I do not find appropriate words to condemn these incidents. Last time an incident was discussed here. After that I wrote to all the Chief Ministers especially asking them to be more alert and careful in such matters, and to make effort so that such incidents do not take place.

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* Participating in the debate on the Motion to consider the Nineteenth Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for the Year 1969-70, *L.S. Deb.*, 21 November, 1972, cc. 294–312.

† Original speech in Hindi.

** Shri Pannalal Basupal.

However, if any such incident takes place then some action must be initiated immediately and a senior officer should be deputed to enquire into it. I also asked them (Chief Ministers) to look personally into such matters.

I feel that I should discuss this matter with the Chief Ministers once again as to how we can check these incidents. Whatever police force we may deploy and whatsoever care we may take, our Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes brethren will not feel satisfied unless the neighbourers do have a feeling that they will not allow such incidents to happen. The hon. Member has rightly said that such incidents are a blot on our society and unless such a feeling pervades everywhere it will be difficult, if not impossible, for the Government to check abrupt recurrence of these incidents.

That is why, I say that this question does not pertain to a particular party. This task has to be undertaken by all of us and it is for us to ensure that these atrocities are not committed anywhere. Our Harijan brothers and sisters or tribal brothers should also be vigilant about it. Whenever they feel that some ill will is spreading against them, they should immediately bring it to the notice of the concerned authorities. Sometimes such incidents do occur abruptly. A petty quarrel may take place and temper may run high. But sometimes some propaganda or misunderstanding is spread, which creates division among the people, or arouses passions in the society, and then one day the people feel engaged and anger takes the form of an incident. Like a boil it develops slowly and then bursts all of a sudden. Thus, if it develops slowly then the residents over there will certainly have that information and they can report it immediately.

Now, it is our collective national responsibility to find out ways and chalk out programmes for rapid progress in this regard. A conference was held recently. Two points were discussed in the conference. In all the Reports of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes' Commissioner, attention has been drawn to the fact that the benefits of the programmes meant for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes do not reach the poorest and the needy. We want to pay special attention to the fact that the benefits of this programme must reach the most backward sections of the society and the ways and means must be found out therefor.

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Our sister* is right while saying so. I do not know why all these jobs (disposal of carcasses) are considered undignified. All these jobs are necessary. But there is no reason that a particular section of the society must do such jobs. If such jobs are to be done in the interests of the society, any person can do these jobs. As our sister has said, such one or two incidents have happened in Uttar Pradesh. The Harijans there refused to do such jobs. Thereafter, contracts were given for these jobs. But there is a difficulty in this regard also. There is large scale unemployment in the country and if, in such circumstances, these jobs are done by others on contract basis, I know an instance in which the Harijans of the village made a hue and cry as to why the contract had been given to others?....(*Interruptions*)...

* Smt. Sahodara Bai Rai.

Sahodara Baiji, I have understood your point. We are also saying that it cannot be done unless we bring about changes in the attitude of the society. Gandhiji also believed that no job was undignified. Everybody who lived in his Ashram had to do all jobs. It was not that Harijans would do this job and others would do that job. We should also try, whether it is a school, a college or an institution, to do all the jobs collectively. We should develop the feeling that no job is undignified. All the jobs are essential for the society. But the caste based division of labour is harmful for the society itself. Everybody should get an opportunity to do the job he likes, and arrangements should be made to dispose of essential jobs collectively. It should not be there that a particular caste should do a particular job. On this point, I fully agree with you. For this an awareness campaign is must as it cannot be done by school education or bookish knowledge, but political and social awareness is also needed so that the people could get the right meaning of all such things. As I have said, such awareness can generate new ideology and new viewpoint, and we can take necessary steps in that direction.

Our brothers from backward classes should be conscious of their rights, but, I think that we should find constructive ways to avoid conflicts forgetting these rights and to make rapid progress. We cannot put this responsibility only on the Harijans, but the whole society has to take up this responsibility. Whatever may have been the reasons of the casteism at anytime, but now the reasons do not exist. Society has changed, India has changed, World has undergone changes and is changing at a very fast speed, so why should we adhere to such an outdated convention which has always weakend us. Because this not only is bad but it hurts people's feelings as well...

Casteism has tightened its hold on the Country and has pushed it into the backwardness, hence, there is no doubt that unless we fight it in full spirit the Country can never achieve greatness. Even if we are able to reduce the poverty to some extent, or remove the difficulties of the people relating to housing, foodgrains or price rise, but if this casteism prevails, and if there is a feeling of high class and low class among the people then this country can never achieve the greatness.....

We have to look into these issues from this angle and while doing so we should not hesitate to reprimand or penalise wherever it is unavoidable. My dear sister has said that we should enact law. Hence, if there is a need to have a law then we should not step aside and should certainly enact such a law, but even then this problem can not be resolved.

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It is a fact that this is not implemented properly and even if it is implemented, then also this problem cannot be resolved through law only, because to achieve this we must bring a change in the overall atmosphere, in the very concept of the people and their way of life.* There are various laws and if need be, new laws might be enacted, but instead of having negative approach we should always resort to some positive ways. We should all actively participate together in this important task because whatever favour is being done

* Replying to Shri K.S. Chawra's remark : "Problem lies with non-implementation."

in the name of violence or religion or caste is deplorable everywhere, whether it is in India, in our society or in other countries. We have always been fighting against it. Therefore, this sort of behaviour towards anybody should not be there.

In this regard our mass media whether it is Press, Radio or other agencies can play a meaningful role. As I said just now, our programme should not be a limited one. Usually it happens that the more powerful sections and those who are well informed derive more benefits from it. Thus we have to ensure that the persons who are really in need are helped more.

Our Social Welfare Minister has asked here for concrete suggestions from all sides with a view to including them in the Five Year Plan. Suggestions have been made for making available drinking water, land for constructing houses, facilities for education, programme for the extension of nutritious diet, and improvement of *Jhuggi-Jhoparis* and if possible replacement by 'Pucca' houses. All these programmes are there. Some significant progress has been made during these years especially in regard to providing jobs, education etc. The total funds earmarked for education earlier have been increasing year after year, and now it has reached up to Rupees 10 crore.

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I would like to have a discussion with Opposition parties in this regard as most of the issues are State subjects and we have to see as to what extent we can interfere.* It will be possible, only if all the parties agree to it.

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I do not remember it correctly but so far as my memory serves, this decision was taken in the meeting of the National Development Council which has the Chief Ministers of all States as its members.** There must be some reason behind it. They always complain that when they themselves have to do everything then why the Centre has its control over it.

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That is why I say that if all the Opposition parties support us then this can be done. Otherwise, any State can complain about the interference.*** At present our party is ruling in many States but it is not the case always. This issue was raised when these States were being ruled by other parties. I will look into it later. But it has to be admitted that with the increase in the number of beneficiaries, the amount has also been increased. That is why we are not able to cater to the needs of everybody with this limited amount.

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* Replying to Shri K.S. Chawra who said, "...The Centre used to give post-matric scholarships till 1968–69 but now this matter has been given to the States...The Centre should start giving it again".

** Replying to Shri Sadhu Ram's remark : "Earlier the Centre used to give, but later on it was placed on the States."

*** Replying to Shri Shambhu Nath's remark : "The Centre grants money, it is not being used properly but it is misused."

During the discussion here a demand was made to increase this amount and I feel that it is justified also. At this moment, I cannot tell you as to how much increase we are going to make because different Ministries have to be consulted in this regard. But we are definitely going to increase it. The discussion here is taking place at an appropriate time, as presently we are also discussing Five Year Plan, hence it would be easier to do such things.

There are certain questions regarding Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and no doubt about others also, but some questions are more important like that of the education. The question of education is important as it concerns all of us. The students are demanding a change in the education system. It should be made job-oriented, besides it should also inculcate the feelings of patriotism, nationalism, integrity and equality. Our Minister is considering all these aspects. But we have the experiences of other nations before us and the feeling is gaining ground that it is not necessary that all students must go for higher education in the universities. In other countries only those students go for higher education who intend to conduct research or want to become teacher or do some other job which requires higher education. Otherwise rest of the students after completing their school education directly go for various training programmes. After completing their training, they become fit for their respective trades. But here, the type of general education being imparted does not help all of them in getting jobs and it adds to unemployment. But here comes another problem; the persons who could not get such educational facilities earlier provided say that they have not been able to get degrees as there were no facilities of this kind, but now when such facilities are available they are being asked not to obtain degrees. All such problems have to be solved through exchange of views with all of you. Suppose we intend to make some changes for the good of society but if it gives rise to the feelings of partiality then it would not be beneficial as it would create ill feeling and the result would be quite adverse. So, the new ideas, which are coming up, have to be discussed with every body, and then we can unanimously find out solutions otherwise it may give rise to a feeling that something is being done against their wishes, and we do not have such intention at all.

We would like to be benefited from the experiences of other countries of the world as well as our own and make some changes in the existing education system. I have said so many times that we have made a mistake after independence because we did not change the pattern of our education system. I am aware of the complexities prevailing at that time and we could not take care of the problems in the field of education because the first and foremost question was to protect the independence of our country. We cannot blame anybody but there is no doubt that if we had changed the system at that moment, our difficulties and problems would not have been so complex today. But now the question is whether we can do it or not? Wherever I go and meet the students, they always demand that something should be done in this direction, but this is possible only if all of us put up some suggestions and do not make it a political issue.

I have nothing special to say but the only thing which I want to put forth is that we are concerned about this issue and as I have said, there is a need to do a lot which could not be done during these years. We have to appreciate that awareness has spread in the

masses. I know that a few years back only the people living in the cities were aware of their rights. Now this awareness has spread everywhere. But a large number of the people in tribal areas are not aware of their rights even today. Now this awareness is spreading in these areas also. It is a step in the right direction, and we hope that the programmes will now be implemented effectively. I would like to point out one thing here. It is true you are aware and alert but why do you wait for a discussion to be held here and give suggestion only then. I feel that whenever something comes to your notice, you should immediately put your suggestion by saying whether it can be done in that way. In our view it should be done, if possible. I think if something is put forward immediately then it can be implemented in a better way. Presentation of these Reports is a regular feature and they will continue to be discussed in the House in future also, but we would welcome your suggestions on what is happening in your districts and constituencies and how things could be improved there. If you look into the matter in such a way that how you can get Central or State Government's assistance for a scheme and what you can do on your own, then I think the hurdles coming on the way can be set right. Members have said that the funds are not properly utilised in the programme, but you can also look into it in your respective constituencies. If all of us jointly take this responsibility to look into the matter that whether the programme announced has been launched in your constituency, and whether the same is being carried our properly–then I think the programmes announced can be implemented more speedily.

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Whenever there are some hurdles, you should bring it to our notice immediately.* There will be no use if you raise the matter after six months. You tell us at that very moment that so and so has put some hurdles in a particular work. You cannot take the responsibility of the entire country but you can do it in the case of your constituency.

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It is not for Parliament to do it, but being a Member of Parliament do you not have any responsibility towards the people of your constituency?** You should take a note whether the Harijans and Tribals in your constituency are facing any difficulty. I am not saying that it is not our responsibility or it is not the responsibility of the State Government but what I intend to say that this will help them if each Member of Parliament tries to understand the situation and intimate the problems, it will also make the Government's task easier. Sometimes we see that a programme is good for a particular constituency according to its local requirements, but it is very much possible that similar programme may not be required in another constituency, thus, some changes may be needed in the programme. The people, who are associated with these programmes can explain it in a better way.

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* Replying to Smt. Sahodra Bai Rai who said that government servants did not give funds in time.

** Responding to Shri K.S. Chawra's question, "Will Parliament do this work?"

The programmes are meant to be implemented everywhere but the problem is that these cannot be started simultaneously everywhere.* It is not right to say that the programmes are not undertaken in the constituencies represented by the Members of Opposition parties.

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No, it is not so.** We all have to ensure that the work is done expeditiously. We hear of tragic stories. We should create such an atmosphere that such tragic events do not take place and work is done expeditiously. As I just now said if there are impediments, you should come forward and tell us about them. We shall see that these impediments are removed.

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The suggestion of Shri Shyamnandanji is good ...(*Interruptions*).*** Some model schools should be set up in the field of education. Howsoever small the problem may be, it becomes a big problem because of huge size of our population....

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* Replying to Shri Hukum Chand Kachwai who said that no work was being done in the constituencies where Members of Opposition had won; and that he was mentioning about his own constituency.

** Replying to Shri Hukum Chand Kachwai who said, "I am saying what is true....If a constituency elects a Member of the Opposition, then the work started there earlier under a Five-Year Plan is stopped."

*** Shri Shyamnandan Mishra *inter alia* wanted to know whether Government could prepare a model (for various fields including education) to ensure all round development of Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes and Harijans so that on the basis of national consensus it could be implemented in some areas.

Removal of Economic and Social Injustices to Women*

Sir, I am not intervening as Prime Minister but as a member of the biggest oppressed minority in the world.

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I believe the female population is just a little less than the male population.**

Some philosophers, poets and hon. Members of Parliament also have spoken soft words and said good things about women but these are outweighed by those who have maligned women through the ages. Women have been and are the most exploited of any section. If a woman is called '*abla*', as she is in our country, it is not because she is weak in herself but because she is so handicapped from birth by customs and social attitudes that she has no chance of developing her innate strength. If Harijans are persecuted who suffers the most ? It is their womenfolk.

If there is poverty or shortage it is the women who go without, in order to be able to feed their children, their husbands and the other menfolk in the family. If there is war, the heaviest burden falls on women. In the family, the wife is usually the cook and servant, doctor and nurse and teacher. In societies where men go to war, women have looked after the farming, the business and other activities. She has borne the most onerous burdens and shouldered the greatest responsibilities. In affluent societies also, she is exploited. She is often regarded as an object to play with or to decorate and display the husband's wealth and status. She may be surrounded by luxury, but she does not have the opportunity to fully develop her personality and she is largely deprived of the fulfilment that comes from participation and effort.

However, Sir, I have not got up to criticise or complain nor to demand that women should attain high positions, but to assert that in asking for equality of opportunity and a more respected status in society, women are thinking not of themselves but of all mankind. In 1923, Kamal Ata Turk said:

> The lack of success of our social structure is due to the contempt in which we have held our women. Destiny meets out our span of life, but to live is to be active. And if

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* Participating in the discussion on a Private Member's Resolution (moved by Shri Indrajit Gupta) regarding the 'Measures to Remove Economic and Social Injustices to Women', *L.S. Deb.*, 25 April, 1975, cc. 304-307.

** Replying to a Member's remark, "Minority?"

only some of the members of a social organism are active, whilst the others are inactive, that organism becomes paralysed. If a social organism is to work and succeed in life, it must satisfy the required conditions and give itself every chance. If, then, our society needs science and technology, men and women must gain them equally. Who does not know that division of labour dominates life, as it does all fields of endeavour ? Within this general division of labour, women must carry out the tasks falling to them, but among these tasks is participation in the general activities essential to the common prosperity and happiness of all.

But he goes on to say and I do not agree with his next sentence:

"Housework is but the least and the least important, of women's duties."

I believe the significance of home-making should not be decried, for the home is the very foundation of society. What sort of home-life a child has, influences the rest of his life, his development and attitudes. Home-making is important enough to demand the attention of both parents. At the same time, to confine women to the kitchen is harmful to the future of the race. A woman with limited interests and capacity cannot be a good housewife, a good mother or a good companion.

In the early ninth century, there was a synod in Europe to debate whether women were human at all, and now in the 20th century, the world has woken up to consider the role of women in contemporary society! Let us use this year to find out where we have failed so far as laws or their implementation are concerned, to activate existing programmes and, if possible, to initiate new ones for women's health and education, for their employment and better conditions of work. But above all, this is an occasion for re-thinking about problems of human relationships within societies, within nations and also internationally and to change the long entrenched attitudes of mind and behaviour. These attitudes affect the behaviour towards the condition of women and our behaviour to other castes and other races, and finally in the larger scheme of things people's behaviour to those who are generally less developed, whether they are countries or groups.

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Certain specific suggestions have been made in this resolution.* As part of the celebrations of the International Women's Year, certain programmes have been initiated. When the axe falls on any kind of financial commitment, it is usually on such programmes. I do not know exactly what the Education Minister** is going to say in reply to this resolution. But we are trying to coordinate the work done by various voluntary agencies with governmental programmes. Obviously, the work cannot end in a year. It can only be a beginning. I sincerely hope that some good programmes in all regions with regard to health, prevention of disease, literacy and so on will be undertaken. Some have in fact

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* Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark, "Why not make some specific suggestions in the context of India? You are being much too general."

** Prof. S. Nurul Hasan.

already been initiated but as I said earlier, the greatest stumbling block is the mental attitude not only of men but of large numbers of women themselves because they are so conditioned by their families and by society around them. I am sure if my hon. friend, Shyam Babu and other hon. Members of the House will make up their mind to change their own attitudes, the attitude of Parliament and the attitude of society, it will be of great help.

Status of Women*

Sir, I shall not take much time of the House. We have just had the pleasure of hearing my friend, Smt. Purabi Mukhopadhyay. I have heard her on other occasions also and I know that she and my other sisters from this side of the House and I hope brothers from all sides have supported the cause of women. In the other House I spoke as a woman to draw attention to some of the handicaps from which Indian women suffer, which prevent their full development and participation. Indeed I would say that these or similar handicaps affect women almost all over the world. But today if I may, I should like to put the question in a larger perspective. It has often been said that the level of any society is judged by the level of its women. Certainly, it is true that the country's progress can be measured by the progress of its women folk. But we have to think carefully about the meaning of 'progress'. My father has quoted someone writing about women. This was not about India but I think it is largely true of the Indian woman, even though he wrote it long back, about 20 years back. I quote–these are not my father's words, this is what he has quoted from somebody else : "She lives in her own time, in the rhythm of her own history which does not quite keep time with the clock of the twentieth century." We still want to keep our own rhythm, but we cannot be entirely out of tune with today's rhythm. The world's rhythm is a changing one. Why can't we women influence it and give it the right beat? We can develop it if we have the opportunity. I think we can evolve a rhythm which is timeless and always in tune. Men, and unfortunately even women are conditioned by our man-oriented society. Shrimati Purabi Mukhopadhyay has correctly said so. We tend to accept the norms which men have made and even today when there is talk about equality we do not really examine it closely or consider what is good or an ideal situation. We notice only what a man does and wonder why we can't do the same. Very little thought is given to this aspect of its rightness or goodness. Men and most women are unaware of the potential ability of women. Their lives are entrapped by pre-conceived notions and attitudes from birth onwards, at every level, in school, in college and in social life. This subtracts from the total. It is not only women who suffer handicaps. A lower status for women, or lesser opportunity for women, is a handicap for the growth of mankind as a whole and for men as a whole. It affects the lives of men themselves. If I am allowed another quotation and this is favourite of mine; many of you must have read Tagore's great play *Chitra*. In it, Chitra speaks to her husband–she says :

> I am Chitra. No goddess to be worshipped nor yet the object of common pity to be brushed aside like a moth with indifference. If you design to keep me by your side in

* Participating in the debate on the Motion regarding Report of Committee on Status of Women in India, *R.S. Deb.*, 13 May, 1975, cc. 259-63.

- the path of danger and daring, if you allow me to share the great duties of your life, then you will know my true self.

Men will not know their true selves until and unless they allow women to develop their full potential.

In the West, the women's liberation movement seems to be a movement towards unisex. As I said earlier, it has become a competition with men, thereby accepting the mores and values set by men. This is not my outlook. Women should have equality in wages and such matters. They must have better services and conditions of work and living, and so on. But speaking for myself, I can say that I do not want women to imitate men, but to have better opportunity for the development of their personality. That is why, I am glad that at the World Conference of the International Women's Year, apart from plans for programmes and action, the main subjects for discussion are : (1) the involvement of women in strengthening international peace and eliminating racialism and racial discrimination ; (2) current trends and changes in the status and role of women and men and major obstacles to be overcome in the achievement of equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities (I am glad that they have included men); (3) the integration of women in the development of process as equal partners with men. This is our hope that Women's year will bring about a complete change in the outlook of society. I fully realise that this can not happen overnight, but it is something towards which we need to work and not merely legislation. We have legislation. A lot of it is not implemented. We must see how to implement it. In connection with the Women's International year we have met a large number of women representing organisations-women lawyers' organisations, medical associations and various others. They were able and practical, down to earth, and knowledgeable about the difficulties and problems of women, and looking at the question not in a grandiose way but devising step by step what can be done; What we wanted to identify were the programmes, small and big, which could be initiated straight away by voluntary organisations, by individuals, or by even ordinary housewives in their mohallas and neighbourhoods. Similarly we have to think how to remove whatever obstacles are in the way of implementing various legislations, what new legislation is required. Much good work has been done. I should like to add my voice to that of Smt. Mukherjee in congratulating Smt. Phulrenu Guha and all the men and women who worked along with her in the committee on status of women. The Education Ministry, had a great deal to do not only with the setting up of the committee but also with assisting in its work in helping to smooth over the various difficulties which are bound to arise whenever any human beings get together. This is a time for us to rethink about women, but I would say we have to rethink about humanity as a whole–and women because they form such a large chunk of that humanity that you cannot imagine the human race going forward or the human race progressing if half of it is to be handicapped at all or considered either lowly or as a play thing or as something for amusement. Even now when we are seriously talking about women's rights and status, we find it causes great amusement amongst many of our friends of the other sex. The other day, when an hon. Member was speaking in the other House, she said something about Women's Year. This brought the repartee. This year is going to last a long time ignoring the fact that for thousands of years, all years have been men's

years and they will try to see that in future also they may be men's years. We should like this International Women's Year to mark a change. We do not want women's years; we want years in which mankind works together as we did in our freedom struggle. Nobody thought then who was a man or a woman. We were volunteers in the struggle for India's freedom. That is the kind of spirit that we want today. All, men or women, should consider themselves volunteers in the struggle, in an endeavour for a better world and for better conditions. To start with, in our own country. We certainly cannot change the world all at once but we should look at problems in the perspective of the whole country and of the world.

I believe in the liberation of women in the same way as I believe in the liberation of men; that is, liberation from all kinds of obscurantism and superstition, from the narrow confines of outdated thoughts and habits. Men and women together can help to create a better society and a better world. In this, there should be no question of class, creed, sex or party. Thank you, Sir.

Atrocities on Harijans and Adivasis—A Stigma on Society*

I share the feelings of anguish of all the hon. Members. We all realise that a debate is necessary for us to vent some of these feelings. But this does not necessarily lead to any solution. A soon as I heard of the tragedy in Pipra I asked the Home Minister to go and he was able to take certain initial steps which gave some reassurance to the people. How effective they have been one can only tell in the long run? We are here as responsible Indian citizens who are proud of our country. Therefore it is all the more our responsibility to cleanse our society of those blots, shameful blots which can only, as hon. Members themselves said, cause shame to us and deprive us of our own self-respect.

I have decided to reactivate the National Integration Council. It is not a solution; it is merely a tool. It is the responsibility of the Government to assure our Harijans and tribal brothers and sisters of full protection. Also the guilty must and should be punished. This is not a new problem. As many have pointed out, it goes back to thousands of years; it is not easy to pull out those old roots. The causes are largely economic but into them art woven traditional social attitudes. Whereas it is Government's responsibility to protect its citizens, it is the responsibility of all of us here, not only as Members of Parliament but as thinking, responsible Indian citizens to work towards the ending of casteism and communalism which are kinds of poisons which urge people to barbaric acts, lead them to forget that they are human beings and that others also are human like them, and have a right to live, to earn and to love and to work. This is something that cannot be removed merely by government decision or government action. It has to be a people's movement. Mahatma Gandhi tried to make it so. In our independence struggle, we did not fight merely for political independence; we did this but part of the struggle was against economic injustice, against social humiliation of all Indians, especially of Harijans, Adivasis and the very weakest who had no voice, and who had no organisation. Today's situation is not the same, it has vastly changed; mainly it is this change which is part of the trouble, part of the cause of the trouble itself. As soon as they started reasserting their right; as soon as they wanted to stand straight with their heads up, a shower of atrocities and harassment descended on them. We are experiencing this also as a nation because this is the attitude of some of the developed nations towards us. They say how dare these poor people, who were cowed down, who listened to us, how dare they stand up and assert their rights? That is something that we have to deal with as a national problem. I know that. When politicians are talking, politics comes in, no matter how much one tries to avoid it. I certainly do not

* Participating in the discussion raised under Rule 193 regarding Atrocities on Harijans and Adivasis, *L.S. Deb.*, 13 March, 1980, cc. 398-401.

want to lay the blame on anybody. What is past is past. But we cannot remove the past; we have to be aware of the past. But now let us try to see how we can put our heads together and how we can create a right atmosphere. This is not something we can do just sitting here or sitting in the Integration Council. It has to be done at the local level. If a group of people have to be protected, basically it is the neighbours who are going to protect them. It should be our task as Members of Parliament from these areas, from every area because all of us have Harijans and may be tribals in our constituencies, to see how to create that atmosphere, where people will not behave so barbarically, however much their feelings are aroused, even if they feel there is a cause for revenge. Once a wrong is committed, immediately the aggrieved feel that they must retaliate. The only solution is, apart from taking all possible administrative and other measures for protection as well as for punishment of the guilty, if we create an atmosphere that this is wrong, that it is not done in Indian society and will not be accepted by society. This is no short term solution. Much as I would like to say that I think such incidents are not going to happen again, I cannot honestly say that. We can only say that we shall try our very upmost, our very best to prevent such things from happening and I hope that in this effort we shall have the full co-operation of all sections of the people.

Blind Men's Grievances*

I am on a point of information, because my name is involved. I am deeply sorry that this incident took place. I do not think that the Home Minister wanted to "throw dust" in anybody's eyes, I am using those words in quotes since they were used by an hon. Member on the other side. Now an enquiry has been ordered and it will show whether it was a regular lathi charge or an inadvertent act, just to keep them together or hold them back, the enquiry will show that....(*Interruptions*)

As soon as we got the news, we instructed that there should be a full judicial enquiry of which the Members have been informed. Furthermore, the group of blind did come to see me today, not all 200 of them, but a fairly large number. I did not count them. They have given their memorandum and I have discussed the points in it with them. But as I had a meeting and as they said that they wanted to say something more, we have given them time in the office also. As hon. Members know, I meet absolutely everybody who wants to meet me. Now the problem is becoming almost out of control; this morning I think, I had 3,000, or so people. Even if you stop only a minute with each, it becomes quite impossible. Nevertheless we are not stopping anybody. We are trying to put them in categories, who has what kind of grievance, so that other people can also listen to them. We have now people from the office to look into grievances that are connected with the Government, I have others to look into other questions. At no time from my side has there been any kind of hesitation to meet anybody of any party or to enquire into any type of grievance. I should like to assure the hon. Members. I do not know why this incident has happened. I have given general instructions that I would not like to meet people on Sundays. May be, it is because of that they were stopped. Nevertheless, when they turn up, I do meet them which I would not like to publicise. But when they turn up, I do not like to tell them to go, so usually I do meet them also. We have told the Home Ministry and the Delhi Administration that in future they should be very careful about such matters.

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* Speaking on a matter raised by a Member under rule 377 relating to the lathi charge on a procession of blind men in New Delhi, *L.S. Deb.*, 17 March, 1980, cc. 307-08.

Reservation of Jobs to Help the Under-privileged*

Before I start speaking, I want to draw the attention of the hon. Members opposite, to the words that have been used and the attitude that is being displayed before them. I am not making any comment. I just want you to note it. Why did we have this debate ? I am not interested in the specific words used in the Resolution or the motion or whatever it is. As you yourself have stated—even though I was not in the House, I was listening to the speeches till I came here and, of course, after I came here—with some minor exceptions and taunts, to which I do not want to refer now, I do not think this is important in the context—there was a genuine desire that we should come to some understanding, that we should, if not take some action, at least exhibit an attitude which would try to help to defuse the situation in Gujarat and in other places where such incidents are taking place. This was the purpose of the debate. Quite often when people want a discussion we are hesitant to allow it, it is not because we are worried about what they will say or the criticism they will mount but because of this doubt that the situation may become worse. This is a moment when tension is high on this particular issue on all sides. At first I had not thought of speaking, but after hearing my hon. friend opposite and also Shri Vajpayee, I thought I should say a couple of words. Anyway, I am not on that issue now. I am not speaking on the question of reservation. I think that our attitude has been made very clear in quite unambiguous terms in this House, in the Rajya Sabha and in all outside forums.

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I do stand by what I said on merit.** I think the whole point of what we are trying to do, the manner in which we are trying to help—I admit that we may not have succeeded and we may not have done it fully. But the point is that merit exists in all our people, but merit has not always been able to come up because opportunities were denied. This is the whole question. Why do we have reservations? It is not for the fun of having reservations. It is because certain opportunities and privileges were denied to groups of people that we wanted to help them to make up. That is what I meant. There is no question of removing reservations or suspending any other help. These were measures to help certain under-privileged communities. So long as their position does not improve these measures and others will have to be taken. Otherwise, we would not have continued reservations. We could have very well said, 'We have tried for 15 years. That is over and we do not continue.

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* Participating in the debate on a Motion regarding the situation arising out of the agitation and violent demonstration against reservation of jobs for SCs and STs, *L.S. Deb*, 18 March, 1981, cc. 473-77.

** Responding to Shri Ram Vilas Paswan's remark, "Merit".

- But we have continued them because we found that the need still exists. But, at this moment I do not want to discuss this question.

Let us recall how this present situation was sparked off. I agree with the hon. Members that there is a basic attitude. There is discrimination in thought and action and such attitudes of mind have to be fought by us. My attention was drawn to the case of a handicapped young man who secured a first class and got a gold medal but this particular post to which he aspired was a reserved one. But that was no reason to start an agitation. In no way do I support the agitation or what they are doing. But when their is such a case, we should look into it and see whether some way out can be found. This is all that I meant. I do not think that there was any misunderstanding about my words, either amongst the Harijans or others. I am sorry that some people have sough to create that misunderstanding. However, that is beside the point. The point is : What are we trying to do in this debate ? Has Mr. George Fernandes's speech helped in creating the atmosphere which all Members, even including Mr. Vajpayee have tried to create ?...

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...The other question is: Just when we are thinking of rising together to pass a particular resolution, is this the atmosphere to create? This is the point which you, Sir, were trying to make. This is the point which all of us want to clarify. I have not seen this particular report which Shri Fernandes is reading. Mr. Chairman said that the hon. Member has quoted from it before. Hon. Member could have mentioned it at some other time but not at the particular moment when the entire objective is to create an atmosphere of calmness, of coolness, of co-operation, to solve a question which is not merely confined to Gujarat or Madhya Pradesh but which is a national question. Apart from the atrocities, the hardships which the Harijans or the tribals in other areas have suffered, there is a bigger question.

The hon. Member opposite referred to national integration. What is happening now is striking at the very root of national integration.

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Before I sit down I want to make one more point. So far as I have heard the speeches, I have not heard from any Member whether he is supporting the bandh on the 25th or whether he is willing to call for its withdrawal. This point needs to be clarified.

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I entirely agree with the hon. Member*. But I object to his manner of putting it.

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* Replying to Shri George Fernandes' remarks : "I think the Prime Minister made the point that the issue is not Gujarat or what is happening there alone but it is so much a basic question..."

8

STATE POLITICS AND UNION-STATE RELATIONS

Talks with Naga Leaders*

The statement is about the Naga talks. A delegation of Nagas including Shri Khugato, Shri Inkongmeron Ao and Shri Isack Swu, accompanied by the three members of the Peace Mission, met me on the 18th and 19th February, 1966. This meeting, as the House will recall, had been arranged in the time of my predecessor. It was intended to be a goodwill visit, and the talks which took place were fully in conformity with this idea. The main subject of our talk was the importance of preserving peace and stopping the many ugly incidents which still take place resulting in loss of life and property. The observer team of the Peace Mission is being strengthened by attaching two official on each side to ensure that all incidents of breach of the agreement on suspension of operations are speedily investigated. It has also been agreed that both parties will take effective and quick action on the findings of the observers. In order to create a better atmosphere and to facilitate a final settlement, the Peace Mission have suggested the release of the Naga prisoners. This matter will be examined. I was impressed by the sincerity and earnestness of the Naga leaders whom I met. They seemed genuinely anxious to ensure the implementation of the agreement entered into in September, 1964, and to prevent further violent incidents and loss of life. I am not without hope that as a result of this meeting a certain amount of unnecessary distrust and suspicion, which had developed on both sides, has been dispelled. We have agreed to have a further meeting for which the Naga leaders will visit Delhi again some time in April, 1966. It is possible—and I would not put it more strongly than that—that at this next meeting some real progress may be made towards a settlement which would put an end to bloodshed and see the restoration of peace throughout Nagaland. The way will then be clear for all sections of the Nagas to play their rightful part in the progress and welfare of Nagland.

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Madam, as I mentioned in the statement, the nature of these talks was purely a kind of goodwill visit.** We did not discuss any concrete subject-matter, and the status of Nagaland not discussed. However, I think that the delegation are fully aware of the stand of the Government of India. We have not changed our stand on this issue at all, the stand being that Nagaland is very definitely a part of India. They have, one of the members of the

* Making a Statement regarding her talks with Naga Leaders, *R.S. Deb.*, 21 February, 1966, cc. 727-32.

** Replying to Shri Bhupesh Gupta's questions. He asked whether the question of the status of the Naga State was discussed in the talks. He further inquired as to what concrete steps the Government proposed to take to promote political discussions at other levels.

delegation has made a statement saying the opposite, but they have been making this statement for the past eighteen years, and it will take some time, and a lot more of goodwill perhaps before some change can be brought about. The only specific issue raised was the question of the recurring incidents, and they agreed with me that it is those people who are not interested in peace who are behind these incidents and therefore we should all make every effort to try and stop them. The purpose of enlarging the team of observers was this that they would be more able to look into this matter and also, as far as possible, to decide who was wrong, and if the number of these incidents can be decreased there by, that I think, will be a big step forward.

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I have received a telegram to that effect, but we have not yet been able to get the full report as regards the burning of the villages and so on.* But one of the main causes for the distrust has been the difficulty of establishing exactly, who was responsible for what had happened, and that was the reason why we stressed the need for the observers playing a more active role.

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The Central Government is fully aware, Madam, that this has been the opinion of these people for many years.** Now we are making a very real effort to try and change this, and this can only be done with great patience and tact.

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This matter was not discussed, Madam, but I believe that there is some truth in this.***

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* Replying to Shri D.L. Sen Gupta's query. He wanted to know whether there was any basis for the statement of these Naga rebel leaders that their villages had been ransacked and that people there had been burnt alive.

** Responding to the clarification sought by Shri M.M. Dharia. He mentioned about an interview which was given by Mr. Isak Swu, posing himself to be the Foreign Minister of Nagaland, who said that they wanted their independence to be recognized by India. Mr. Isak Swu declared Mr. Phizo as the "President of the Federal Government of Nagaland". Shri Dharia expected the Central Government to take note of this interview.

*** Replying to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's query. He wanted to know whether the underground Naga leaders accepted that some underground Nagas were not behind them and some were beyond their control and they violated ceasefire.

Disturbances in West Bengal*

First of all, I want to make it very clear that both the Central Government and the State Government are distressed at the firings which have taken place and the people who have died. The parents of the boys and the people who have lost their lives have our full sympathy. No Government likes to resort to firing. On the other hand, as the Home Minister has pointed out, when a certain situation arises, that situation has to be dealt with. It is true that we have in our country an extremely difficult food situation. This matter has been debated in this House and in the other House. I have myself appealed to hon. Members to try and help in this situation. Hon. Members on the one side would like us to provide as much rice as is wanted and on the other hand they do not wish us to import rice. Well, how and from where is that going to come ? We are prepared to and we are doing our best to import as much as can be imported. We are also trying our best to have better distribution of the rice that is available here. Bengal is procuring, Bengal has a programme of procurement, which is going quite well. It is true that not as much rice as is wanted by everybody is available but, nevertheless, the amount of the ration including the wheat is more than it is in many other parts of India. Now in these circumstances there is only one way open for us all, and that is to get together and try and find a way out, and see how we can share each other's difficulties. And the way is not to try and create confusion, is not to incite people so that violence ensues. I have been to Calcutta, Madam. I could not go to Nadia district, but I have been to Calcutta. I have met a large number of people there and I have found that, by and large, there is no grievance about rationing. It is true that there was a difficult situation in Nadia district, but it could have been met; if people had clearly tried to explain what the difficulties were, it could have been met. But there has been an attempt–I do not wish to say anything against anybody or against any party–but the fact remains that there has been a very deliberate attempt to exploit every difficulty. And who suffers? I have stressed this point in this House earlier. Who suffers ? It is not the Government which suffers that way. It is not the Opposition parties who suffer. But it is the poor people of India who suffer and are suffering and, Madam, I would here like to say very clearly that I do accuse those people who today are trying to cause this suffering to our people, who, instead of giving the lead and helping our people to face the difficulties with courage, are, on the contrary, increasing those difficulties. What has happened in Bengal today, apart from the sorrow caused to the families concerned, apart from the great damage to the public exchequer, to which funds come out of the pockets of the public, apart from all this it does create a feeling of disturbance all over the country. It does create

* Speaking on the Statement made by the Minister of Home Affairs regarding Disturbances in West Bengal, *R.S. Deb.*, 8 March, 1966, cc. 2508-10.

a feeling of instability in the country, and if at a time of food shortage like this, if at a time of economic difficulties such as this, if hon. Members feel that this is the way of dealing with the situation, or bringing about a better situation, or creating increased food production, I am very sorry to say that I cannot possibly agree with them there.

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*Mr. Vice-Chairman, I am going to take only a couple of minutes of the time of the House, and there is nothing much to be added to what the Home Minister has already said. But since name has been brought in and certain words were used, I want to clarify the situation.

I am supposed to have used the word "helpless". I want to make it quite clear that I did use this word but not in the sense which has been attributed to me. I said that in view of the stand taken by the Opposition, in view of their deliberate plans for violence, I was helpless to intervene in the matter. It is true that when Shri Samar Guha asked to see me– it has been my normal practice from before, which I intend to continue, that, I meet everybody who comes to see me–when Shri Samar Guha asked for an appointment, I told my Secretary I would see him. We did not know at that time that there was already a warrant against him, which was in the hands of the subordinate officers who in turn did not know about my appointment. Therefore, he was arrested in the morning. I was not in contact with him directly and nobody told me about this. No other Opposition leader asked to see me except Shri Hiren Mukerjee whom I did see.

I take grave objection to some of the allegations which have been made here from the opposite side of the House against the Government. Many sad things have happened in Bengal. I said here earlier and I would like to repeat that we have the greatest sorrow for the families who have lost people, whose members have been killed in the firing. No Government likes to resort to firing and certainly we do not. But when I went to Calcutta and when I heard the sort of plans which were afoot and which were later proved to be correct, what was expected did happen. I was asked whether the Army should be called in. Whether it is constitutional or not I do not know, but I was asked and I did agree that if trains were attacked, the Army should be called to protect the trains. Trains were attacked. Now as the Home Minister has pointed out, and other Members have pointed out, the Government's primary responsibility is not only to provide the necessaries of life as far as possible and as far as they can to the people but to see that law and order is observed. If you do not have law and order, none of the other things can be done. You cannot provide better food or other necessaries. If you have chaotic conditions in Calcutta City or anywhere else in West Bengal, then you cannot simultaneously say, "have a national food policy" or "give more food". It is just not possible. Therefore, the first thing is to have normalcy. I have appealed to Members opposite, I have met the Members who come from West Bengal of the Opposition, and I am prepared to meet anybody else who wishes to come and see

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* Speaking on the statement made by the Minister of Home Affairs regarding Disturbances in connection with Bengal Bandh, *R.S. Deb.*, 11 March, 1966, cc. 2930-32.

me to discuss this problem; but first some kind of way has to be found in which conditions can return to normal. While there are people who are advocating violence, it is no use debating who is responsible. There was a very definite call made for the "Bengal Bandh". It was not a secret call. It was a public call, an open call. Although, as the Home Minister has mentioned, in a statement you can say that you want this to be peaceful, we all know how peace is broken, how things get into violent hands. Now we must all endeavour to get the situation back to normal. In spite of all the things which have been said about the Chief Minister here, I would like to assure the House that he is not maintaining a rigid attitude and he is genuinely trying to find a way out and to meet whoever it is possible to meet. I hope that with co-operation from all sections of the House, we can face the situation. The situation is a bad one. I have already told the House that the food situation is an extremely critical one. It is no use saying, give more food when the food is not there. We have to try and sit together and find some way in which there can be better distribution; where there is greater hardship, it can be alleviated. But it cannot be done by having this kind of strike or by destroying Government property or by inciting people to this kind of demonstrations. All the energies which could have gone towards solving certain local problems are diverted to these other things. And with the best of desire or willingness, they have to be diverted to this until, as I have said, the situation comes back to normalcy.

Shri Arjun Arora mentioned about a national food policy. I have myself talked about this and I am very keen to have it. But I am sure he knows, as other hon. Members know, that amongst the hon. Members of the Opposition, there is not one view-point on this. There are perhaps as many view-points as there are Members. And therefore, although we want to get together on this and we want to have suggestions from them, it is not easy to find one policy which will be acceptable to all.

Explosions in the North-East*

Sir, I wish to express the deepest sympathy for the families of the innocent people who have lost their lives in these explosions. I can well understand the concern, the anxiety and the indignation which has been expressed by hon. Members. I can also understand the slightly different feelings expressed by the hon. Member, Shri Swell. I want to assure him straightway that we do have the deepest concern also for the people of the Hill areas. It was because of this concern that we want to establish peace in these areas. Much has to be done in these areas and it is only through peace that we can go ahead with works of development and so on. I shall always be ready to discuss this and other matters with him or anybody else who has suggestions to make.

The point which I really wanted to make has already been made by Shri Swell which is that the matter is still under investigation. I have been in telephonic conversation with both the Governments of Assam and of Nagaland. We are sending a very senior official from the Home Ministry to help in these investigations and to try to come to a conclusion quickly.

I have also been trying to contact some of the so-called underground Nagas through the Government of Nagaland to express our great distress over these acts of violence so that our views might be conveyed to them, but I was told that it would take at least two or three days even to contact them.

Some mention was made here of the Rev. Michael Scott. We have already expressed our views on this. I have nothing new to say except that at this moment he is lying ill in a hospital in Shillong...(*Interruption*). I do not know what illness he has. This is the information given to me.

What I really wanted to assure the House was that Government would take the sternest measures against those who were found responsible for these acts of violence and incidents as soon as something is reliably established. Also, if it is proved that those with whom we are having talks are concerned or are responsible, obviously the whole approach will have to be reviewed. But I would beg of the House not to jump to conclusions in a hurry.

I should once more like to assure the House that the Government views these outrages with the greatest concern and will take every step to ensure the security and life of our people and the integrity of the country.

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* Participating in the debate on the Motion regarding situation arising out of the explosions at Lumding and Diphu railway stations, *L.S. Deb.*, 25 April, 1966, cc. 12937-40.

Tackling Hostile Nagas*

On 7th March, 1968, our security forces in Kohima District of Nagaland State received information that a gang of approximately 200 armed Underground Nagas was camping at Thetsema village, 40 miles South-East of Kohima. The same gang was earlier reported to have camped in Chobama village, about the same distant from Kohima. As our security forces approached Thetsema village on 9th March, 1968, the Underground Nagas opened fire on them. Our security forces returned the fire and in the exchange, one Underground Naga is believed to have been killed. One Jawan of the security forces sustained injuries. The hostiles vacated the camp which they had established in the village school and immediately withdrew. The situation is being kept under careful watch.

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†This incident which has occurred recently is really serious and hon. Members would appreciate that immediate steps were taken and we achieved success. Since the cease-fire has taken place, some such incidents are happening here and there. An hon. Member** has rightly pointed out that this is the first incident which is of a serious nature. But other incidents have taken place in Manipur but not in Nagaland and there too we are trying to combat them successfully with the full might at our command.

As regards policy, the point is how this situation which has arisen there should be faced? I have at several occasions pointed out that there are some Nagas, such as the present Government of Nagaland and its supporters, who are of the view that all those activities, the unlawful activities which are going on, should be curbed. Our policy is to strengthen their hands in this task, and endeavour to see that more and more Nagas come to our side. We feel that since the day these talks have taken place, in spite of the fact that there is a group of underground Nagas which indulges in unlawful activities and we are fighting it out, a sense has prevailed among the general public that there should be peace and that sense is gaining momentum. We should not act in a way which would shatter that feeling. But at the same time I would like to add that if wrong steps are taken by some people which violate the cease-fire, we must be prepared to counter those steps.

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* Replying to a Calling Attention about the reported firing by the underground Nagas on the Security Forces, *L.S. Deb.*, 20 March, 1968, cc. 1814-20.

† Translated from Hindi.

** Shri Raghubir Singh Shastry.

†There is no point in negotiating with them at this moment–neither from our side nor from their side. As far as the hon'ble Member Hem Barua has pointed out that is right, I used a wrong word, actually I wanted to say "suspension of operation" [instead of cease fire.]

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This matter has been discussed earlier in this House and this is a fact that some groups have crossed over to the other side of the border.* Many of them have been stopped. But some have escaped. We are trying our best to seal the border to the extent possible. But this cannot be done with one stroke, it can be done only slowly and gradually. We are doing it with alacrity as far as possible, but it is still far below our expectations.

As far as the question of Manipur is concerned, I have already said that we are determined to tackle the situation successfully and it is under control to a large extent.

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We cannot be hasty in such matters. We are negotiating with the Government of Nagaland and whatever is appropriate would be done. The threat from China, which has been pointed out by an hon. Member** is a real one and it is looming large in other areas too. We are combating this danger with full might at our command.

† Translated from Hindi.

* Replying to Shri Madhu Limaye's remarks about the border crossing by hostile Nagas and going to China for weapons.

** Shri O.P. Tyagi.

Situation in Assam, Nagaland and Manipur*

The visit of senior officers is part of the normal administrative process of maintaining contacts and making an on the spot study of developments. Accordingly, a team of senior officers consisting of the Secretaries of the Ministries of Home and External Affairs and a Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Defence visited Shillong, Kohima and Imphal from the 24th to the 26th March, 1968. During their visit, they held discussions with the Governor of Assam and Nagaland, the State Government of Nagaland, the Chief Commissioner and Chief Minister of Manipur. The officers have submitted a Report to the Government, setting out the results of their discussions. This Report is being studied.

I should perhaps take this opportunity to state that measure are being taken in consultation with the Government of Nagaland, to further strengthen the machinery for the maintenance of law and order in the State. The visit of the officers provided an opportunity to strongly reiterate to all concerned that the Agreement on Suspension of Operations must be respected in letter and spirit and its breaches prevented. The Government of India, on its part, wishes to implement this Agreement and it expects the Underground Nagas to do the same. I should also like to state that the reported movement of some Underground Nagas to China for military training and import of weapons is a serious violation of the Suspension of Operations Agreement. Naturally, we are taking all necessary steps to prevent such violations of the Agreement. The violation has also been brought to the notice of the Peace Observers' Group.

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As I mentioned in the statement, the report of this Secretaries' team is being studied**. As far as I know, they have not made any recommendations with regard to Assam, but only about Nagaland and Manipur.

With regard to the situation there being an extremely difficult one, that is entirely true. We have been in touch with it even before this team went. Every measure is being taken to see that these wrong influences which are working in that area are curbed.

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* Statement in response to a Calling Attention regarding the visit of a high level official team to Assam, Nagaland and Manipur, *L.S. Deb.*, 1 April, 1968, cc. 1191-1200.

** Replying to Shri Hem Barua who wanted to know about the different measures suggested by the Secretaries' team regarding the situation in Assam, Nagaland and Manipur.

This is a suggestion for action. The team did not go to influence anybody.* It went, as I said, to study conditions in that area.

Earlier on, Shri Hem Barua said something about the economic conditions in Assam. We are certainly aware of the situation and we agree that it is very important that steps should be taken to develop these border areas and to help the people there.

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†...The fact is that whatever is being done there, it is in consultation with defence forces. **So far as the question of giving a free-hand to defence forces is concerned, no such situation has arisen in which they want a free-hand....

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†...There is a group which wants separation, but most of the Nagas do not. Presently there is no question of holding talks with them; but, at the same time, we should not do such a thing as will make even those who are with us, our enemy. We should keep this in mind. When we had an Agreement with the Government of Nagaland, there was an agreement on this matter also that the matters pertaining to Nagaland would come under the Ministry of External Affairs. Since many hon. Members have raised the issue–that it should remain under the Ministry of Home Affairs, we are having talks with the Government of Nagaland on this.

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* Replying to Shri Kameshwar Singh who wanted to know whether a Parliamentary Delegation would also be sent to Nagaland. He also *inter alia* said that the visit of the team of officials could not make any impact as disruptive activities had been going on there.

† Translated from Hindi.

** Replying to Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta, who *inter-alia* wanted to know, whether Government would give a free-hand to defence forces to deal with insurgency in Nagaland.

Development of Telengana*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, during the last few weeks, I have conferred with my colleagues in Government and Party, the Leaders of the Opposition in Parliament, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, political leaders of some parties from Telengana and other parts of Andhra Pradesh as well as others, on the prevailing situation in Andhra Pradesh.

These talks have been held in a spirit of free and frank exchange of views and with the object of evolving constructive steps to meet the genuine problems of the people inhabiting Telengana. We had to keep in mind the importance of finding urgent and positive solutions which would further the objective of providing immediate as well as long-term answers to the needs of the people in the Telengana region and, at the same time, of maintaining and strengthening the unity and integrity of Andhra Pradesh. The overall aim is to ensure that the pace of development and the expansion of employment opportunities in Telengana is accelerated, and conditions are created for the balanced development of all parts of Andhra Pradesh through cooperative and shared efforts on the people living there.

With this objective a number of specific measures have been decided upon, as follows:—

A high-powered Committee will be appointed by the Central Government with a retired or serving Supreme Court Judge as Chairman and an eminent Economist with knowledge of State finances together with a senior representative of the Comptroller and Auditor General as Members.

The Committee will go into the varying estimates and representations and determining the surplus relatable to Telengana which was expected to have been spent on the development of the Telengana region. The Committee shall report to the Union Government by the end of the next month.

Discussions will take place immediately between representatives of the Union Finance and Home Ministries, the Planning Commission and the State Government regarding the manner in which the requisite financial resources could be found to take good the surpluses relatable to Telengana.

At the suggestion of the Chief Minister, it has been agreed that a high-powered Telengana Development Committee shall be constituted immediately, composed of the

* Making a Statement regarding Telengana, *L.S. Deb.*, 11 April 1969, cc. 328-32.

Chief Minister, Andhra, as its Chairman, and a Member of the Planning Commission, the Ministers of the Andhra Cabinet belonging to the Telengana region and the Chairman of the Regional Committee for Telengana as its Members.

The main functions of the Committee will be to identify within the overall framework of the Five Year Plans, the programmes and schemes relatable to the Telengana region with reference to the physical as well as financial targets to be achieved: to review from time to time the actual implementation and working of these programmes and schemes; and to advise the State Government on appropriate decisions that may be considered necessary.

There will also be a Plan Implementation Committee at official level, presided over by an Adviser of the Planning Commission, and composed of representatives of the Union Finance and Home Ministries and the State Government, with the object of detailed periodic review of the actual implementation of Plan programmes and schemes relating to the accelerated development of the Telengana region.

This Committee will meet every quarter and make its report to the Chief Minister and to the Prime Minister.

In order to ensure adequate coordination as well as effective and speedy implementation of decisions the Chief Minister will consider what further delegation of powers, if any, need be made in favour of the authorities specially entrusted with the task of the dealing with the problems of the Telengana region.

The possibility of providing for appropriate constitutional safeguards in the matter of public employment in favour of people belonging to the Telengana region will be examined by the Government of India in consulation with a Committee of Jurists.

At the suggestion of the Chief Minister, it has also been agreed that the high- powered Central Advisory Committee which was set up under the State Reorganisation Act of 1956 (which is headed by the Chairman of the U.P.S.C. and composed of a retired High Court Judge and a retired Law Secretary of the Union Government) will undertake a very early visit to Hyderabad, in order to examine expeditiously the grievances of the public servants of various categories and make appropriate recommendations to the Union Home Ministry.

The Union Home Ministry will also devise an urgent programme within a definite time schedule, with the object of deciding any outstanding cases relating to the integration of the Services.

The Chief Minister has assured that the State Government shall implement promptly any decisions that the Government of India may give in the light of the advice tendered by the Central Advisory Committee or the State Advisory Committee.

In order to ensure the continuous attention of the Central Government towards the problems of the Telengana region, at the suggestion of the Chief Minister it has been agreed that the Prime Minister will hold review meetings, every six months, with the Chief Minister and his other colleagues in the high-powered Telengana Development Committee referred

to earlier. The Deputy Prime Minister, the Union Home Minister, such other Union Ministers whose presence may be found necessary, and the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission will also be associated with these meetings.

The accelerated development of the Telengana region, and the balanced economic development of the State as a whole, and objectives which can be secured in an atmosphere not only of peace and tranquility but also of amity, understanding and cooperation between people inhabiting different parts of the State. In the course of his talks with me, the Chief Minister indicated his desire to make, in consultation with me, appropriate political arrangements which would promote these objectives.

There was recognition in the course of various discussions, of the importance of restoring an atmosphere of complete peace and harmony in Andhra Pradesh. May I take this opportunity of appealing the people of Telengana to end the present agitation, and of inviting them to extend their wholehearted cooperation in the fulfilment of various positive measures evolved as a result of these discussions, and any other measures that may be devised hereafter. Towards this end, I propose to continue further, the process of discussions with the widest possible section of public opinion in Andhra Pradesh.

I should like to assure the people of Telengana as well as those of other parts of Andhra Pradesh, that their genuine problems will receive the continuous and sympathetic attention of the Central Government.

Statehood for Manipur and Tripura*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Government are aware of the interest taken by the Members of this House in the question of the constitutional status of Manipur and also Tripura. We appreciate the aspirations of the people of Manipur and Tripura...to have the status of their territories raised to Statehood, and fully realise the strength of feeling behind these aspirations. Government have also taken note of the special circumstances of these territories, Manipur and Tripura in which the demands for statehood have been made.

We accept the demands in principle, but details have to be worked out keeping in view the importance of a co-ordinated approach to the problems of development and security of the North-eastern region, and we hope to be able to announce our decision within a short period. Government earnestly hope that in the meantime an atmosphere of peace and harmony will be maintained by all sections of the people in the two territories. (*Interruptions*)

* Statement regarding Statehood for Manipur and Tripura, *L.S. Deb.*, 3 September, 1970, cc. 21-22.

Statehood for Meghalaya*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, my colleague, Shri K.C. Pant, was to have made the statement yesterday at 5.00 P.M. Just five minutes before that I received a message from the Chief Minister of Assam which needed consideration. By the time we completed consideration, the House adjourned and the statement could be made only in the other House about 6.00 P.M. I regret the inconvenience caused to the House.

As the House is aware, some time ago we re-organised the State of Assam and constituted the Garo Hills, and the Khasi and Jaintia Hills districts into the autonomous State of Meghalaya within Assam. This arrangement took into account the need to provide adequate scope for the political aspirations of the people of this area, while preserving the overall unity of the State of Assam. The decision to grant Statehood to Manipur and Tripura, however, necessitated a fresh look at the status of Meghalaya. The Chief Minister of Meghalaya urged that in the changed situation, Meghalaya should be made a separate State. Later, Shri K.C. Pant visited the north-eastern region and discussed this matter with the Chief Minister and other Ministers of Meghalaya, as well as with the Ministers of Assam. Recently the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly has passed a resolution demanding full Statehood. On October 2nd, I was in Gauhati, and further discussions were held with both the Governments. Taking these factors into account, Government have decided to accept in principle Meghalaya's demand for Statehood. We shall consider with sympathy the request of the Assam Government for assistance in building a new Capital.

The need for a coordinated approach to the problems of the development and security of the north-eastern region gains further importance in view of the contemplated constitutional changes in this region. We are studying these problems to see what further measures are necessary. I propose to have a discussion with the Governor, Lt. Governor and Chief Ministers concerned regarding this and other connected matters in the near future.

Meghalaya came into existence with the goodwill of all sections of the House. I hope that the decision to raise it to Statehood will also be welcomed by the whole house.**

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* Statement regarding Statehood for Meghalaya, *R.S. Deb.*, 11 November, 1970, cc. 112-13.

** An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi in Lok Sabha also, *(L.S. Deb.*, 10 November, 1970, cc 340-41.)

*Mr. Deputy Chairman, several questions have been raised, and reference has been made to the message received from the Chief Minister of Assam. I said in my statement that discussions have taken place with him and his colleagues; it is true that this was when he was not Chief Minister, but he was practically acting-Chief Minister as Mr. Chaliha even then was very ill.

An hon. Member** raised the question of Manipur and Tripura getting Statehood. That is the main reason for the discussion regarding Meghalaya. As I said, this question had been discussed with the Ministers of Assam and other people.

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Telengana is quite a different proposition.*** There are certain economic problems. As you know, we have taken certain steps to see that the difficulties which had arisen should be solved. We have to give some time to see how this works.

There was also difficulty about the services and so on which we are also trying to solve.

Regarding the consultation with the Assam Ministers, this was not once but on several occasions. Since our friend opposite is so anxious to make baseless allegations regardless of the subject under discussion, I might mention the date also. The discussion with me was on October 2, and with my colleague, Shri Pant, about a month earlier. Therefore, there was no question as to who would be taken in the Cabinet, which was to be formed several months later.

As far as the Article in the Constitution is concerned, naturally, the last word is with Parliament. All these matters are always brought to Parliament and hon. Members have full opportunity to discuss all these problems. Although economic questions have to be considered, of equal importance are human questions. And in this strategic area equally important is the fact that all the people should have a sense of belonging and of working together. That is why when we brought forward the earlier Bill, and now also in my statement. I have laid special stress on the same integrated approach to this area with regard to development as well as security. This is why we are not taking any steps until this larger question is solved.

There was no great hurry. But questions were being asked in Parliament. Since we had already taken a decision, we thought that before rumours spread we might as well make an announcement. We could have delayed it until today. But you know the cyclostyled statement had already come to both the Houses before it was made. That is why we thought that it would not be proper to delay it.

Now, there are various other demands. I would not call these fissiparous tendencies. The problem is special to Assam. It is not only a question of economic backwardness;

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* Replying to the questions asked by Members.

** Shri A.D. Mani.

*** Replying to Shri Mahavir Tyagi, who asked "What about Telengana".

that applies to the entire region, to the region of Assam and the regions within Assam and the regions around Assam which are today Union territories and so on. The question of development is very important. We must see that no section has a feeling that its just demands are being ignored. Everything should be done to see that the economic problems as well as other problems are looked at and solved. And I am sure this will be possible if everybody cooperates with goodwill.

There is no question of any part of India going outside India. Neither has it come to my notice that this has been raised in Assam. From time to time there has been raised a slogan which I consider unhealthy and dangerous. The slogan is against the non Assamese who are settled in Assam. But it has nothing to do with Assam going out of India. Even this slogan is due to misunderstanding because the area is backward economically.

We have now taken certain steps. We are trying to help the area. We are trying to develop it economically, providing greater employment and so on. I am sure this situation will soon improve.

It is really a question of gaining the confidence of the people.

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Somebody mentioned the question of a new Capital. The question of a new Capital had been raised a very long time ago when there was no question of Meghalaya. In fact, I think during one of my first visits to Assam, which was in 1955 or earlier, even at that time, people had approached me and said that they would rather have their Capital in Gauhati as Shillong was completely out of the way for them. Anyhow this matter was also raised by the Chief Minister and other Ministers and we have said that the Centre would help.

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Some people in Assam felt that the Capital of Assam should not be in Shillong but should be in the plains because Shillong was out of the way for most of Assam. This demand has been consistently made by some sections. Now, with regard to Delhi, we have answered this question many times. The question is not economic or any other. The question is that the Capital of India happens to be here. Now perhaps some people think it is fortunate that Delhi happens to be the Capital. Our friend may think it is unfortunate. I do not know what it is. But the Capital has to belong to all the States of India; it cannot be a separate State.

Minister to Deal with Problems of West Bengal*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, as the House is aware, by a proclamation issued this morning, the President has taken over the administration of the State of West Bengal. The Central Government are anxious that all problems relating to West Bengal which are within their competence should be dealt with expeditiously. Very serious problems and an abnormal situation have been created in West Bengal and some other States by the massive influx of refugees in so short a period. These matters need to be given special attention and tackled urgently. It has, therefore, been decided to appoint a Minister of Cabinet rank as Minister without portfolio with immediate effect. For the present, Shri Siddhartha Shankar Ray, Minister of Education, Social Welfare and Culture will be entrusted with this responsibility in addition to his existing duties. As soon as the consideration of the Demands for Grants of his Ministry is completed, he will look after this exclusively.

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**Sir, I have pleasure in introducing to you and, through you, to the House my new colleague Professor Syed Nurul Hasan.

I have sought your permission to make a very brief statement because in my statement made in this House on the 29th June, 1971 soon after the President took over the administration of the State of West Bengal, I had said that Shri Siddhartha Shankar Ray would look after the work relating to West Bengal and the problems created in that and some other States by the massive influx of refugees and would, in due course, shed his portfolios of Education, Social Welfare and the Department of Culture. It was felt at that time that the onerous demands of West Bengal and the problems of refugees would require the undivided attention of a Cabinet Minister. However, when the decision was reviewed in the light of actual experience, it was found that, in view of the marked general improvement in the situation in Bengal since this appointment, it would be possible for Shri Ray to look after this work in addition to his ministerial duties. The subsequent appointment of Professor Nurul Hasan as Minister of State in the Ministry of Education

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* Statement regarding appointment of a Minister without Portfolio to deal with problems of West Bengal, *L.S. Deb.*, 29 June, 1971, cc. 282.

** While introducing a Minister and making Statement regarding portfolio of Shri Siddhartha Shankar Ray, *R.S. Deb.*, 15 November, 1971, cc. 13-14.

and Social Welfare and in the Department of Culture, has given Shri Ray the assistance of a distinguished educationist. I have, therefore, decided that Shri Ray will continue to be in charge of his portfolios in addition to looking after the work relating to West Bengal and refugees.

Mulki Rules*

Last week this House had occasion to discuss the situation in Andhra Pradesh arising out of the Supreme Court judgement regarding the Mulki Rules. In certain parts of that State there have been violent incidents resulting in loss of life and damage to public property. This has caused deep distress to us in the House and to people all over the country. I had appealed to all sections in the State and all political parties to help in the effort to restore public tranquillity and to bring about a climate of confidence and trust.

We had hoped that it would be possible for the leaders of the State to come to an agreement through discussions between themselves. However, this did not happen, and the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and his colleagues wanted the Central Government to take decisions on all matters relating to the Mulki Rules.

During the last few weeks, my colleagues and I have held discussions with the Andhra Pradesh leaders and representatives of different sections of the people. These discussions revealed an overwhelming desire of the people of Andhra Pradesh for a solution within the framework of the existing integrated State. After the most earnest consideration of the issues involved, we have taken certain decisions which I should like to place before the House in the course of this Statement.

At the time of the formation of the State of Andhra Pradesh in 1956, it was realized that the people of Telangana would need some safeguards in the matter of public employment and an agreed formula was evolved by the representatives of the Andhra and Telengana regions. As a matter of national policy, residential qualification for public employment was removed in other areas, yet Parliament, enacted the Public Employment (Requirement as to Residence) Act, 1957, in order to provide for posts in the subordinate services in the Telengana area being filled subject to the requirement of residence in that area. This law was envisaged as a temporary measure and was to expire in March, 1974; however it was struck down by the Supreme Court early in 1969. Since then the question of devising suitable measures to secure representation of the people of Telangana region in the public services of the State has been engaging the attention of the Central and State Governments. The recent judgement of the Supreme Court has brought about a new situation requiring the adoption of further measures to give effect to the objectives envisaged earlier.

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* Statement regarding the Mulki Rules, *L.S. Deb.*, 27 November, 1972, cc. 248–51.

It is common knowledge that the Mulki Rules are applicable only to certain posts under the State Government and are not applicable to recruitment to the All India Services, to posts in the Central Government offices and the public sector undertakings of the Central Government.

The measures decided upon are as follows:—

(i) The residential qualification prescribed in the Mulki Rules will apply only for the purpose of recruitment to non-gazetted posts and posts of Tehsildar, Civil Assistant Surgeon and Junior Engineer in the Telangana region. However, in the case of composite offices, such as the Secretariat, the offices of the Heads of Departments and common institutions of the State Government, these rules will apply for the purpose of filling the second vacancy in every unit of three direct recruitment vacancies in non-gazetted posts.

(ii) These safeguards will remain operative in the Telangana region up to the end of December, 1980. However, in the cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, the safeguards will continue only up to the end of December, 1977. This distinction has been made because the State Capital is located in these cities.

(iii) In order to provide adequate avenues of promotion to the Government servants working in each of the two regions, the various service cadres will be regionalized up to the first or second gazetted level. This will not, however, apply to the services which act as direct feeders to the All India Services.

(iv) Educational facilities, including those in the technical and professional fields, which are available at present. Telangana students in the cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad will not be adversely affected. In these cities the facilities will be suitably expanded and these additional facilities will not be subject to any restrictions on the basis of residence.

(v) For the cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, there will be a composite police force, the details of which will be worked out in consultation with the State Government.

Necessary legislation to give effect to the decisions, mentioned above, will be brought before the House shortly. The Central Government will devise suitable machinery to ensure the proper functioning of these arrangements.

The above-mentioned decisions have been taken, keeping in view the requirements of the integrated State, the legitimate interest of the people of both the regions in the matter of public employment and education, and the assurances given in this House. Government hope that these decisions will receive general acceptance in the State and will be implemented in a spirit of understanding, co-operation and accommodation.

I appeal, in particular to all Members of Parliament, to help in maintaining peace in all parts of Andhra Pradesh.*

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* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi in Rajya Sabha also, (*R.S. Deb.*, 27 November, 1972, cc. 127–30.)

*Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is really not much need for me to speak as my colleague, Shri Chavan, has brought a cooler and calmer atmosphere to prevail in the House and has dealt with the really important points. But some hon. Members even of the Opposition had earlier expressed the opinion that it might be misunderstood if I did not clearly state our views on some points which have been mentioned here before. They are not new, nevertheless, they thought I should do so and that is why I have got up.

Parliament discusses many important issues which are highly emotional, and the Mulki Rules have become one such issue. Matters which involve regional feelings quite often do arouse the emotions of the people in this country as in many other countries, and we certainly cannot ignore the emotions of the people. But I should like to stress what Chavanji has said, that no solution can be found while the atmosphere remains charged with emotion. Any solutions, any answer has to be found in a very cool, calm and rational manner.

Therefore, although I was also, as were many other hon. Members touched by the emotions expressed by hon. Members, by the difficulties of our friends from Telengana and friends from other parts of Andhra Pradesh, we were certainly touched by the difficulties and emotions–I should very respectfully say to them that all these matters have to be thought of not in terms of emotion but in terms of calm and collective thought. And not in terms of today or tomorrow or the day after but of what it will mean to them and the country ten years hence, 20 years hence, a hundred years hence.

Hon. Members have been discussing here, and separately with me, the question of a few posts or a few matters like this. As Chavanji very rightly said, does this really touch the lives of the people? It does not. The whole problem of employment has assumed vast proportions for us. There is unemployment all over the country. Not only in our country but in almost every country of the world. This is one of the phenomena of contemporary society. I am not saying this to excuse our own shortcomings or difficulties. The problem has to be faced. This is why this question has assumed such vast proportions.

Naturally, if you put to the people that a particular development has affected their employment, it has affected their rights, they will become emotional. Anybody will become emotional. I do not know how many people have gone to the public at large and said, "Let us sit down and think about it, what difference will it make in terms of employment, in terms of the other opportunities for the people in the Telengana region, for the people in the other districts of Andhra Pradesh?" So, I do not think that the issue has been fully and squarely put before all the people there. Therefore, the reaction today has also to be viewed in that light.

Now, the present debate, with all due respect to hon. Members, is not about socialism. It is not about the welfare of the country at large or many of the points which were raised, especially by the hon. Member** who spoke first. This is a very limited issue; a very small issue. It deals specifically and only with the Mulki Rules, and the situation that arose

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* Replying to the debate on the Mulki Rules Bill, 1972, *L.S. Deb.*, 21 December, 1972, cc. 321–31.

** Shri B.N. Reddy.

because of the Supreme Court judgement. Some hon. Members said that nothing had happened. But I would respectfully say that a great deal has happened all these years. There was if not to our entire satisfaction, certainly a degree of calm; not the calm of the graveyard as some friends are so fond of repeating; and the situation was moving towards improvement. I am not saying that it had vastly improved. But certainly it was moving towards improvement. Then this judgement on the Mulki Rules was delivered and suddenly it was as if a fire had been started all over the State. How did the whole situation with regard to the Mulki Rules arise? The State of Hyderabad was the largest of the old princely States. One hon. Member has said and rightly that in this State there were individuals, there were families of very high culture. But for the vast majority of the people there was poverty, they had not had opportunities of education or social welfare or of public health, or any kind of amelioration of their living conditions. When the composite Andhra State came into being all sections of the people recognised that for greater cohesions certain special measures of a transitory nature were necessary. The leaders of the people unanimously arrived at a gentlemen's agreement which we all accepted.

Since Shri Joshi is here I should like to just remind him. He cut a joke, he thought at our expense, on the word "gentleman". But in those days gentleman was not a polite phrase at all; "gentleman" was used for a particular section of people who were completely divorced from the rest of the people. We have no objection not being counted in that section of the people. It is just like the earlier... argument over "lady" and "woman". I had then very categorically said that we were women bearing burdens and responsibilities as well as wanting our rights, we did not want to be "ladies" and "gentlemen" sitting on some platform above everybody else.

So, there was this agreement. Now, regardless of any agreement we all know that even within a family there are differences and disputes. There is no State in India which does not have backward areas. Relatively backward and advanced areas exist not only in all States. But in different regions of the same States. In the Andhra region, many Members have drawn attention to areas such as Rayalaseema and Srikakulam. The Telengana region, may be a backward region but it does have better off areas.

Merely because an area is comparatively backward is not reason enough for taking drastic or irreversible decisions. Where will this process end? I am not at all afraid of this being catching; that is not the point. But where does any one draw the line? Will each district want to be separate? Some people have advised the division of U.P. Where to divide into two, three, four, into how many areas do you divide it? Do you go back to the old, very small States, princely States, do you go back to that ? Somewhere a line has to be drawn. You cannot just say that because of backwardness there should be division. As Chavanji has rightly pointed out, economic backwardness can go only through hard work and the effort of the entire nation.

While there will always be sympathy and understanding for the special hardship of the backwardness of any special group or any special area. I do not think that anyone should be allowed to develop a vested interest in backwardness.

This is really a general problem and it is a part of the very much larger problem of poverty itself. There is, I am afraid, no immediate solution to it. In the early stages of development, it is always more difficult to allot resources because the general level is so low that any extra provision is extremely difficulty, but inspite of this, an effort was made in the third and fourth Plans. As the House is aware, on the basis of the recommendations of the National Development Council, 225 districts were earmarked for concesssional finance from public financial institutions. In this area included district from the Andhra region as well as from the Telengana region.

In the Fifth Plan, it is our intention to launch a massive minimum needs programme. I do not want to go into the premise of this programme, some of which you know and some you will soon learn about. This is the only way in which a real solution can be found. While transitional measures may be necessary in some areas for historical or other reasons, I think we should all view the problem and the possibilities of its solution in the proper perspective.

So far as the present Bill is concerned, Shri Mirdha has already explained the scope of its provisions and I do not want to go into it again. However, I should like to make just a few general observations. As the House is aware, the Supreme Court held that section 2 of the Public Employment (Requirement as to Residences) Act, 1957 which sought to repeal the Mulki Rules, was bad. This was a complex situation. This was not the first time. In between many things have been going on. The Mulki Rules themselves were declared invalid and so on. It is not at all a static situation. But this has created a complex situation. It is obvious that the administration could not be run on the basis that Mulki Rules would apply to posts under the State Government at all levels. Certain appointments made in the past also had to be regularised. My friend opposite was much concerned about this. He felt that it might mean going back and reinstating people. I should like to re-assure him that this is not at all the case. I do not want to go into the details of this. But I think the fears are unfounded. We had also to consider the past assurances given to the people of Telengana area with regard to public employment and also their present needs. We have not at all gone back on any assurance given and I should like to re-assure the hon. Members that we are deeply concerned with their problems. But we feel that this is not the way of solving them. In fact, as I said on an earlier occasion, merely talking of separation is not an end of the problem. It is the beginning of another very big problem, not for other States but also for that area, that State itself. The decisions which we announced on the 27th November, 1972 were in the response to the request by the leaders of the State; they themselves have said that we should do something.

Regarding this Bill, several Members have suggested that we might circulate it for public opinion, send it to the Supreme Court and so on. They asked, what was the hurry? The hurry is in the immediate interest of the proper administration of the State. It is obvious that any delay would create serious complications. I stand very firmly for an integrated State, but I should like to say that so far as this matter is concerned, even had there been two States, it would have made no difference to this Bill because it deals mainly with the problem of the twin cities and also the rest of Telengana. That problem would remain no matter what other things you do because a large number of non-Mulki is there.

Unfortunately, even in the speeches...some little bitterness crept in. It does not matter how many States we have, you still will be neighbours and you still will have to deal with one another in a hundred and one things. Thinking that just because you are separated, you can get rid of these people or we have got rid of this problem is a very facile way of thinking. Our experience has not shown that this comes true.

Rightly there is a strong feeling in the country that any residential qualification for public employment goes against the very concept of common citizenship which is enshrined in our Constitution. But at the same time, the framers of the Constitution did realise that the safeguards available to people who suffer from special hardships could not be abrogated straightway. This was one of the purpose of article 35. It kept alive the Mulki Rules, which had come to be looked upon as a valuable safeguards and had generated an emotional attachment. When the Telengana area was merged with Andhra, there were assurances from the Andhra region that this safeguard would be continued in certain respects. This approach was accepted by successive Governments in Andhra Pradesh all along even while there were different judicial pronouncements on the Mulki Rules.

This is a fact which some people tend to forget. The present Bill retains the Mulki Rules in certain respects but provides for their phased repeal. I should like to make it clear that it is not the intention of the Government to come to the House again to extend the time limits mentioned in the Bill. As I have said earlier, in the life of a State, a period of five to eight years is an exceedingly small one. Recognising the fact that the capital belongs to both regions, the Central Government has decided to repeal the Mulki Rules in the twin cities three years earlier than in the remaining Telengana region. Even during the intervening period, employment opportunities in the capital are being extended and educational facilities expanded for the citizens of the other regions of Andhra Pradesh also.

This again gives rise to certain doubts and fears in the mind of our friends from Telengana. I should like to assure them that the present Bill not only keep intact the safeguards voluntarily agreed to in the Public Employment Act, which was struck down subsequently, but seeks to go a little way beyond that.

The Bill covers three of the five points mentioned in our decisions. The two other points do not require any legislation. I am mentioning this, because this matter was commented upon from the Benches opposite. Considerable work has already been done on the scheme of regionalisation of services, and the whole scheme will be finalised before long. The State Government will then make necessary amendments to their existing service rules and put the scheme into operation. The other decision related to the expansion of educational facilities in Hyderabad-Secunderabad. The Ministry of Education has already discussed this matter with the State Government and in the light of these discussions the State Government is framing specific proposals. Suitable machinery will be devised so that these measures are faithfully carried out.

While we were seeking a solution to this particular situation, other points have been raised. It is said that the continuance of the Regional Committee for the Telengana area impedes the integration of the State of Andhra Pradesh. Shri Raghu Ramaiah and others

have spoken about the separate budget for Telengana. A third point was that Telengana is not the only backward area in the State.

As you know, the Regional Committee is a committee of the legislature itself, set up at the time of the formation of the State, to give confidence to the people of the Telengana region that the assurances given to them were being properly implemented. It provided for the closer association of the people of Telengana in the development of their area.

The budget, of course, is not really separate, as Shri Raghu Ramaiah said. There are two separate sheets, but it still forms part of the same budget. But the basic problem is not of mathematical calculations. It is a question of the overall economic condition. I can appreciate the feeling of those who want all barriers which stand in the way of the fuller integration of the State to be removed. I look forward to a day when all these walls are demolished and there is no need to have such special arrangements. Such a situation will emerge progressively with the disappearance of economic disparities. May I remind this House that even the Constitution visualizes them as temporary and transitional? Meanwhile, of course we are giving special thought to what to do for the other backward areas of the State. The speedy development of those areas is equally important and suggestions have been made for some special arrangements which we are looking into. We would also be quite willing to have one or more regional committees or development boards for such areas, if the people so desire, and the details of this can be worked out in consultation with the leaders of the State.

Perhaps, there is a feeling that the norms adopted in allocating receipts and expenditure under different heads could be improved so as to make them more equitable to both regions. This question can also be gone into and if any assistance from the Central Government is called for we shall try to provide it. Because what is really needed is the provision of adequate resources and this is always dependent upon how much Shri Chavan can find for the entire country. He also does not have a magic bag into which he can dip for resources.

It is obvious that the resources of the entire State will have to be mobilised for this purpose. This is generally the approach which we have adopted for the removal of imbalances in the development. Whatever resources the Central Government can provide for this purpose will, I hope, be forthcoming.

Mr. Frank Anthony is not here. I have just one rejoinder to make. He was speaking about minorities and our friends of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and about their reservations. It is quite true that with all the reservations, everything that we had hoped to do has not been done. There are still many disabilities. But he addressed his remark to the wrong person, Shri Bhandare. Shri Bhandare is the one person who has always been elected from a general seat. He does not come from a reserved seat. So, his remark that "you will not be elected once the reservation is removed", was to the wrong person.

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Sir, Parliament represents the will of the whole nation. Its duty is not merely to go into the rights and wrongs of a situation but also to view problems from the national point

of view. Shri Chavan has stressed this point. But I would like to repeat it. While all of us here are elected from particular constituencies, once we are here in this hall, I think we should consider ourselves not as merely the representatives of one little area but as the representatives of the whole country and the entire people of India. And each problem has to be viewed from that angle.

The very first article of our Constitution declares that India is a Union of States. Each State has had a long cultural and historical tradition and each State has become a political entity in its own special way. Andhra Pradesh has been a distinctive cultural unit for thousands of years. The name has been found in the earliest Budhist writings. All the parts which now constitute Andhra Pradesh have been under one umbrella for long periods of history. Let us not look at just the immediate period of history.

Perhaps, it was this long history which inspired the Telugu-speaking people when they yearned and struggled for several decades to form a unified Andhra Pradesh. May I cite a little bit of my personal experience? I happened to be touring parts of the South just before the Report of the States Reorganisation Commission was made public and my ears are still reverberating with the fullthroated cries of Vishal Andhra ... (*Interruptions*). It was really the will of the Telugu-speaking people which prevailed over the proposal of some people to retain the old Hyderabad State.

I have taken a lot of time. I should like to make one more point. Mr. Frank Anthony is absent. He spoke at length and he has on previous occasions spoken about the great mistake of forming linguistic States. There are some things which are part of our national life. It is true that the question of linguistic States was very much a part of the national movement. There was no getting away from it. The units of every party which was in existence at a time, were formed on the basis of language in spite of the British Provinces having different areas. There is an overall rationality in the formation of our various States and we should be very careful not to break this foundation of rationality in momentary passions. As I said at the beginning we should consider the feelings of people but it would be very wrong for the Government to be swept away by feelings. We must see what is in the larger interest of the people themselves. We are not saying that the interest of the people of Telengana should be sacrificed for our interest or for the interest of other parts of India. But the Government must think in a very calm manner about the interest of the people of that very region and see what will serve their interest best.

The Telugu-speaking people have a reputation of forthrightness, but they also have an unsurpassed tradition of service to the nation. I am sure that no Telugu-speaking person whether he lives in the coastal region or in Rayalaseema or in Telengana will ever do anything even in anger or in desperation which is not in the larger interest of their entire State and also in the interest of the country as a whole. I can understand the emotions of our friends here. This has been a period of great agony for us all to watch the developments in Andhra Pradesh and the tragedies that are taking place. I also should like to express my deep sympathy with the parents and families of those who have lost their lives. But we must look at this matter in the larger perspective. This particular Bill of course does not

touch the larger aspect at all. This is a very limited Bill but because hon. Members have talked about other things, I also had to give my views on them.

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*Most of the points which have been raised have been replied to in one way or another in the last few days, and I do not think that there is any doubt in the minds of hon. Members. When emotions are roused–as they are these days–in the different districts of Andhra Pradesh, whether in the Telengana area or in the other areas, when apprehensions, suspicions and doubts, arise, all one can say at this moment is that one must try to regain a certain amount of calm to enable one to think coolly over these questions and try to seek a solution which is in the larger interest of the country's unity and strength.

The Telengana question first arose because of the backwardness of that area. But we know that that is not the only backward region in India. There are many backward States. We know that within each State there are backward areas. We know that even within a single city there can be very poor areas, backward sections. So, as I have said earlier in this House, we should not so easily and so glibly talk of division and separation merely because there is inequality of development. Telengana is certainly a backward area. But so is Rayalaseema or Srikakulam. And within Telengana there are also better-off areas, the twin cities, for instance. So, this whole problem has to be viewed from a much larger perspective and we should not allow ourselves to be swept off our feet because passions happen to be roused. I am not belittling the passions or emotions. I also would like to convey my sincere sympathy to the families of those who have lost their lives. The life of every Indian is valuable, and it is always sad when such action takes place and people lose their lives and valuable national property is destroyed. But just because there is passion Government cannot be swept off its feet. It would not be a Government at all if it were to say let us give in because this is what the people want. There are many genuine grievances and the Government must always keep its eyes and ears open to the real needs of the people, but not when passions are aroused in this manner. That is not the time to take any drastic action or decision which will affect the lives of millions of people, not just for today but for the future. Whatever decision we take today is not merely for a few years, it must give a firm foundation for the future.

It is rather strange that so much passions has been generated and there is talk of injustice. I think it was Mr. V.B. Raju or perhaps another hon. Member who said that the whole question of Mulki Rules concerns just a few posts, certain service conditions etc. And in order to secure those posts some people seem to be willing to give up the larger opportunities that they would have in the bigger State. It is obvious that the larger the area, when once it is developed, the greater the opportunity for further development, for further employment and so on. In a smaller area there are certain advantages in the beginning. You can go much faster but you will reach a point when the opportunity for employment, or for other progress is limited. Unless, of course, you regard the entire country as your own which is what we would like to happen. Then, the entire field is open.

* Replying to the debate on the Mulki Rules Bill, 1972, *R.S. Deb.*, 23 December, 1972, cc. 74-78.

So we have to think of a solution, one which will satisfy not just a group of people in one area or the other immediately but one which we know to be in their larger and more long term interests. If we are to talk about relative backwardness, where do we draw the line? Telengana was the old Hyderabad State. There were many such princely States. Are we going to return to those old borders? And with what results? Would it not create confusion? And would it be even in the interest of development and progress and prosperity of the country? This is the major question which has to be decided.

The problem is one of overall development with special emphasis on those areas which are more backward, on those sections of the people who have so far been denied adequate opportunities and their due rights under the Constitution.

Sir, perhaps the rightness of the Government's stand is proved by the fact that the Opposition is taking two opposing stands. There are those who say that the whole concept of Mulki Rules is wrong and we should not support them at all and there are others who criticise us for to restrict them. So it is obvious that we have found a middle path which tries to give the greatest justice to both sides.

I do not want to go into the history of the Mulki Rules. Hon. Members are aware of the historical background. Even though we all subscribe to the concept of our country being one and every citizen having equal rights anywhere in the country, we are conscious of the areas where we have to take special steps. This has been accepted by all. This is how the Mulki Rules have come about. But, the present situation arose because the Mulki Rules were upheld by the Supreme Court. It is not the Government which declared that the Mulki Rules should stay, it was the Supreme Court judgement which declared it so. This has immediately created an extremely difficult and complex situation in the State because the administration cannot run on the basis that the Mulki Rules are to be applied to posts in the State Government at all levels. Certain appointments, made in the past have also to be regularised. We also have to consider the past assurances given to the people of Telengana with regard to the public movement and also their present needs. So the Bill was absolutely necessary and urgent in the immediate interest of the proper administration of the State. Any delay would create very serious complications. As I have said, the present Bill not only keeps intact the safeguards voluntarily agreed to in the Employment Act which was struck down subsequently but seeks to go a little way beyond it. As we are short of time I do not want to go into further details. Most of the other points have been replied to, the legal points as well as the others, at one time or another. The only question is how we can bring about a better atmosphere in that whole area so that whatever difficulties exist can be sorted out calmly and rationally. Just now there is bitterness between the two regions. But no matter how much they dislike each other or suspect each other, they still have to live together. There are a large number of people from other areas of Andhra living in the twin cities and it is they who are being affected by the Mulki Rules. The geographical position of the States cannot be changed no matter what anybody feels. Therefore, sooner or later, we have to live in friendship with our neighbours. So each one of us would try to lessen the bitterness and to find a real way out. Earlier on it was the people of Andhra Pradesh who wanted the bigger State. As I mentioned in the other House. I can still hear the echoes of the slogans which were shouted when I happened to be touring South India

just before the States Reorganisation Commission's report was put out. People knew vaguely what the report said. I was not allowed to sleep all night because at every station there were tremendous crowds who did not want to say or hear anything except one Visalandhra–such vast crowds that the sky seemed to be reverberating with sound. I cannot forget this. So we should make an earnest effort to see that Andhra Pradesh which was the dream of the people of the entire region and which was realised, remains intact. This will have a major effect on all the people who live there. It means the mobilisation of all the resources, it means utilising them for all the people, with a little more for those who have not had the opportunities which some others have had. I am sure if our friends from Andhra Pradesh whether they live in Telengana, or whether they live in the coastal districts or in Rayalaseema, if they will all set themselves to this task, it is not impossible to do, the aim is not impossible to achieve. I sincerely hope that this Bill which does not deal with any larger problem–it deals only with the situation as it developed because of the Supreme Court ruling–will be passed.

Some hon. Members had a great deal to say about my party there. But we all know that whenever such regional feelings come up, people get swayed by them. Not only my party, all parties are swayed. Some hon. Members have decided to boycott the debate. Why? Because, they do not want to be committed one way or other. They are waiting to see what would happen in the end. We cannot do this. When we believe an action to be right, we have to stand for it, we have to fight for it. This is our attitude. I sincerely hope that all Members of this honourable House will support this.

Accord with Sheikh Abdullah*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, in pursuance of Government's policy to secure the active cooperation and involvement of all democratic, secular and progressive forces in the country it was considered desirable to have a dialogue with Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah. Hon. Members are aware that Sheikh Abdullah had played a notable part in the freedom struggle and in the accession of the State of Jammu and Kashmir to the Indian Union. He formed and headed the Government of the State for a number of years after Independence. Despite the differences which led to the subsequent estrangement it seemed clear from the public statements made by Sheikh Abdullah as well as personal talks with him that his commitment to basic national ideals and objectives had remained unchanged. He reaffirmed that the accession of the State to the Indian Union was final and irrevocable. His main area of concern was about the legal and constitutional changes made after August, 1953.

It was decided that Mirza Afzal Beg whom Sheikh Abdullah named for the purpose and Shri G. Parthasarathi whom I entrusted with the task should examine these changes in depth and make appropriate recommendations. After extensive discussions they reached agreement on various points which are incorporated in the Agreed Conclusions, a copy of which is placed on the Table of the House. These conclusions formed the subject matter of further discussions at a political level in which Sheikh Abdullah, Syed Mir Qasim, the Chief Minister of the State, and Sardar Swaran Singh participated. As a result of these an understanding has been reached as disclosed in the letters exchanged between me and Sheikh Abdullah, copies of which are placed on the Table. I shall refer to certain basic features of the understanding.

The Agreed Conclusions have been formulated within the framework of the Constitution of India. The constitutional relationship between the State of Jammu and Kashmir and the Union will continue as it has been and the extension of further provisions of the Constitution to the State will continue to be governed by the procedure prescribed in Article 370. There will be no weakening of the ties which exist between the Union of India and its constituent units of which the State of Jammu and Kashmir is one. The existing jurisdiction of the Centre to deal with activities directed towards questioning, or disrupting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India, or bringing about cession or secession of any part of the territory of India from the Union, will also continue. It has also been agreed that any amendment of the Constitution of the State on certain specified matters of importance will not become effective unless the assent of the President is obtained. The Agreed Conclusions

* Making a Statement on Jammu and Kashmir, *R.S. Deb.*, 24 February, 1975, cc. 236-49.

seek to reassure the State that in case the State Government comes up with any proposal to change any Central law made after 1953 on matters in the Concurrent List such as social welfare measures, cultural matters, social security, procedural laws and the like, the grant of assent to the Bill will be sympathetically considered.

A proposal was made by Mirza Afzal Beg that the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court in relation to the State should be curtailed. This was not accepted as it is considered important that the Supreme Court should continue to have its original and appellate jurisdiction in the matter of Writs, appeals and other matters. However, it was agreed by collateral letters (Copies of which are placed on the Table) that the provision in Article 132 (2) enabling the Supreme Court to grant special leave on the refusal of a certificate by the High Court need not apply to the State. Action on this, will, however, be taken only when the State Government comes up with a proposal in this behalf.

Hon. Members will notice that the question of nomenclature of the Governor and the Chief Minister could not be settled. This is a matter which is provided for in the State Constitution which at present uses the expressions "Governor" and "Chief Minister". A change in the nomenclature can be made only by amendment of the State Constitution by the State Legislature. So far as the Chief Minister is concerned, there should be no objection to the adoption of the designation 'Wazir-e-Azam' in the State if the Legislature of the State of Jammu and Kashmir amends its constitution accordingly. Until this is done, the present designation would continue.

Sheikh Abdullah was very anxious that to start with, the constitutional relationship between the State and the Centre should be as it was in 1953 when he was in power. It was explained to him that the clock could not be put back in this manner. Mirza Afzal Beg pressed for the transfer of provisions relating to Fundamental Rights to the State Constitution, the removal of the supervision and control of the Election Commission of India over elections to the State Legislature, and the modification of Article 356 to require the State Government's concurrence before imposing President's Rule in the State. It was not found possible to agree to any of these proposals. I must say to the credit of Sheikh Abdullah that despite his strong views on these issues, he has accepted the Agreed Conclusions.

The State Government is in agreement with the understanding reached and the approach in regard to political cooperation with Sheikh Saheb and his followers, as being in the interests of the State and the country.

Hon. Members will have seen the statement made by Mirza Afzal Beg on February 6th, 1975 to the effect that in the changed circumstances plebiscite has become irrelevant and that the name and objectives of the Plebiscite Front have to be changed accordingly. We have been informed that this statement was endorsed at the recent meeting of the Executive Committee of the Party and that Mirza Afzal Beg has been entrusted with the task of calling a meeting of the General Body of the Front for taking the necessary followup action in this regard.

As is disclosed in the letters exchanged Sheikh Abdullah has stated in clear terms that the future of Jammu and Kashmir lies with India and that as one who cherishes the ideals

of democracy, secularism and socialism, he has come forward with his cooperation with a view to further strengthen the bond between the State and the Union. We have every confidence that he will make his own distinctive contribution to the task of strengthening the nation and sustaining its ideals.

The settlement that has been reached is an entirely domestic matter. It has been the endeavour of Government to find satisfactory solutions for political problems in a spirit of conciliation. The manner in which differences with Sheikh Abdullah have been resolved shows the vitality of the functioning of our democracy. It is my sincere hope that the agreement will open a new era of understanding and cooperation with those in the State of Jammu and Kashmir who had not associated themselves with the mainstream of national life during the last two decades. It will also amply demonstrate the identity of interests and ideals of the people of the State with those in the rest of India and mark a milestone in the onward march of our nation.*

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**Sir, as I said in my statement, there is no doubt about Jammu and Kashmir remaining an integral part of India. In this respect it is just like our other States.

A question was raised about article 370. As the hon. Member Shri V.P. Dutt has pointed out, the situation in Kashmir has been different from that obtaining in any other State. It had a Constituent Assembly of its own in order to draw up a special Constitution for the State. This aspect has to be kept in view. The Constituent Assembly was not only to determine the Constitution for the State, but also the sphere of the Union's jurisdiction over the State and it was left to the Assembly to decide whether article 370 should remain or be modified or abrogated and this is reflected in clause (3) of that article. That is why article 370 was called temporary as the Constituent Assembly of the State did not give its decision by 1950. Now, the Assembly completed its work in 1956. But it did not suggest the deletion or modification of article 370 which, therefore, became a permanent part of our Constitution since 1956. The present agreed conclusions do not seek to make any change in the existing position and the assumption of some of the Hon. Members opposite that the present agreement makes article 370 permanent is, therefore, not correct. We are only accepting the existing situation. This is supported by the Supreme Court decision of 1970.

An hon. Member has asked about laws which have been made after 1953. In my own statement, I have mentioned this matter and have said that in case the State Government comes up with any proposal to change any Central law made after 1951 on matters in the Concurrent List, it will be sympathetically considered. There is nothing in this that goes beyond what is in the national interest.

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* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi in Lok Sabha also (*L.S. Deb.*, 24 February, 1975, cc. 308-12).

** Replying to the questions asked by Members, *R.S. Deb.*, 24 February, 1975, cc. 246-49.

Some hon. Members have asked for a debate. We ourselves would gladly welcome any discussion or debate. It is for the Chair to decide what form it should take.

An hon. Member opposite, I think from Tamil Nadu, seems to think that we are now considering Sheikh Abdullah as a freedom fighter. This is not so. He has fought alongwith us in the freedom struggle. Nobody has denied his previous role. In between he seemed to have changed his mind and, therefore, there was disagreement and the estrangement which I have mentioned in my statement. Now that he is again expressing his willingnes to work for unity, for secularism and for the progress of the country and to see that Jammu and Kahsmir remains in the mainstream of national life we welcome this change of attitude. Previously, he played a major part in taking certain initial decisions. His fight was a part of the national freedom struggle. He represented the National Conference which participated in the conferences and deliberations of the State's people's conferences which led the freedom movement in princely States.

So far as the question of the State's autonomy is concerned, I think Dr. V.P. Dutt has already clarified that there is a very special situation obtaining in J & K. They have their own Constitution and in that Constitution they did have the term "Wazir-e-Azam". I might inform the House that whatever name they may choose for themselves within their State, it is their business. But, so far as the Centre is concerned, we would like to call all the Chief Ministers as Chief Ministers. Already, in some States, the Chief Minister has his own designation in the State language. In Tamil Nadu, as the hon. Member must be aware, a Tamil equivalent is used. But this is limited to the language used within the State. So far as the Centre is concerned to us all Chief Ministers will remain Chief Ministers. I entirely agree with some hon. Members on this—there would be utter confusion if each Chief Minister had a different designation. Sheikh Saheb will not be able to call himself Prime Minister in English even in his State. In English he has said that he will use "Wazir-e-Azam" in Roman characters.

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Sir, I entirely disagree with Shri Niren Ghosh's view that there was no democracy in J & K in the intervening period. So far as the wishes of the people are concerned, provided they are in line with national interests, we always try to accommodate them....

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Obviously this is recognized*. In our Constitution there is the Union List and the Concurrent List. I do not think there is any confusion about this. The present situation has been in existence from the beginning. This is not a new situation.

Our Party has offered its support to Sheikh Abdullah. But I think there is a vacant seat, and it is possible that he may contest the election and get elected.

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* Replying to Shri K.N. Dhulap's question, "There are two Constitutions–State Constitution and the Central Constitution. Which Constitution will prevail ?"

*Mr. Speaker, I beg to move :

"That this House do consider the statement made by the Prime Minister in the House on the 24th February, 1975 in relation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir."

My task has been made easier because of the warm and widespread welcome which the understanding with Sheikh Abdullah and my statement of February 24 have received in the House and in the country at large. In the week that has gone by, the Statement has been analysed and commented upon by the Press and the public. And, with the exception of groups which have had a closed mind on Kashmir (or which do not like the Government to do anything right) the reaction has been one of relief and rejoicing.

Why have the people welcome this accord? Because they feel that a controversy, which had been with them for two decades and which had caused much misunderstanding and defied solution, had now ended through an act of reconciliation. Any act of vision and statesmanship appeals to people, especially the people of India.

So, something which was becoming chronic has been settled through discussion, through dialogue, through an exercise of political courage and personal accommodation on both sides. It is particularly praiseworthy that Sheikh Abdullah, overcoming whatever bitterness he might have had, should have clasped the hand of friendship extended to him. He has done this in the larger interest of Kashmir and of the country as a whole and of the cause which is dear to him, namely the strengthening of democracy and secularism.

This new political understanding is worthy of a person of Sheikh Abdullah's long record of service to the people and our cherished values. About forty years ago Sheikh Abdullah became the foremost leader of the Kashmir people's fight against feudalism and he made his struggle a part of the larger national struggle for freedom and secularism. In the forties he stood out against the divisive policies of the Muslim League. In 1947 when the State was invaded by Pakistan, he rallied the people in the defence of the State and promoted the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India.

How right this accord is can be judged if we see what elements are opposed to it and why Pakistan is not happy, because the accord has strengthened India and deprived Pakistan of a pretext to mislead world opinion. Mr. Bhutto gave almost ill-advised call for hartal on Friday. But the people of Jammu and Kashmir ignored this call, and rebuffed this blatant interference in our internal affairs. This shows their good sense and patriotism. The small group of pro-Pakistan elements which has not taken kindly to the agreement, will, I hope, draw the appropriate lesson. Pakistan should realise that it cannot exploit persons in the State and continue to mislead world opinion.

Another group which has been unhappy with the agreement is the Jan Sangh. When I made my statement on February 24 the Jan Sangh spokesman was quick to call it a "surrender". I hope that in the intervening week the party would have tried to find out the value of the understanding and why the people have welcomed it.

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* Moving a Motion for the consideration by the House of the Statement made by the Prime Minister in relation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, *L.S. Deb.*, 3 March, 1975 cc. 246-49.

Hon. Members might have read of the two explosions in Srinagar, one on the 24th and another on Saturday night. These are pitiful demonstrations of the frustration of anti-national elements, a confession of their failure. Fortunately, they did not cause much damage. Such acts will not affect the morale of the people of Kashmir and of India. On the contrary they will arouse indignation. I warn the wrong doers that they will be sternly dealt with.

I do not propose to go into the details of the understanding. Some of my colleagues will deal with these in the course of the debate. As I said in the House the other day, it is not so much the legal niceties involved in the accord which matter as much as the substance of the achievement which Sheikh Abdullah has described as the re-establishment of trust and confidence. We believe we have established a solid foundation for mutual cooperation. I am sure the House will also view it as a great essay in harmony.

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*Mr. Chairman, Sir, we had a fairly lengthy debate and the various points raised—legal, constitutional, political—have been dealt with by most speakers on both sides of the House, for a change. The hope that I had expressed earlier that the Jan Sangh would show an understanding of the background, the spirit and the benefits of the accord has been belied. This is evidence of their chauvinistic policies and authoritarian outlook. They cannot understand that bitterness can be overcome by seeing things in the larger perspective and by moving forward in trust.

The understanding that has been reached is within the framework of the Indian Constitution which, ensuring that the Union functions effectively, is sufficiently broad-based and flexible to accommodate special requirements and situations and to provide ample scope for the socio-economic development of constituent States.

Some Members spoke of autonomy. This seems to have become a catch word. Our Constitution provides for a strong Centre, yet it gives considerable autonomy to the States. It is wholly wrong to think that constitutional arrangements stifle the States in any way.

None of us can claim to be as great as Mahatma Gandhi but I can assure Hanumanthaiyaji who is not here just now, that we are not subjective when we talk of Centre-State relations. Without a strong Centre, how can the States hold together? If each State looks only to its own interests how will the weaker States be helped? All our States are inter-dependent and each needs something from the other. The Centre is the thread which binds them together. At present, most States, in fact, I would say all States, find it useful to have someone on whom they can lay the blame for whatever they are unable to do, for their shortcomings.

I believe in diversity and decentralisation. Individuals, groups and States should be able to develop their personalities and their resources. Local initiative and talent should

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* Replying to the debate on the Motion regarding the Statement made by the Prime Minister in relation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, *L.S. Deb.*, 4 March, 1975, cc. 327-35.

be encouraged. But I believe equally in unity. Without a strong Centre there would be no united country. What freedom would the States then share. State autonomy should be inseparable from national strength. Any demands in the name of autonomy which are incompatible with national strength will not be acceptable to the people of our country.

I can assure the hon. Member opposite, from the DMK, that we have never called him or anyone names. Nor shall we do so. But, if anybody works for or propagates a policy which weakens the nation, we must say so.

Shri Hanumanthaiya was in great form yesterday, but he indulged in a flight of fancy when he compared Chief Ministers to ants. One of the books which made an impression on me when I was a child was *Macterlincks's Life of the Ant*. Ants may be small, but they are industrious creatures and their communities are very disciplined and highly organised. I do not know to which of these qualities Shri Hanumanthaiya was referring.

Many Members have spoken about article 370, either in criticism or in explanation or in support. As has been said, this is a specific provision made for Jammu and Kashmir in our Constitution taking into account the historical and political factors which prevail in the State. It lays down a procedure for the progressive extension to the State of the remaining provisions of the Constitution with the concurrence of its Government. This has been working satisfactorily all these years, and several important and necessary provisions have been applied to the State in this manner. There is no reason to assume that further extension of provisions to the State is ruled out. Given mutual trust and confidence, there is bound to be mutual appreciation of the needs of the State and the Centre (*Interruptions*).

Shri Vajpayee made much of a particular sentence. I used the other day. It is characteristic of the Opposition to try to find a word on which to trip us—ignoring the spirit and the substance.

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My observations on the present status of article 370, to which Shri S.N. Mishra took exception, are based upon the Supreme Court's decision of 1970.

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I had quoted it earlier*. I had said so the other day also.

What I said was that because the State's Constituent Assembly, which completed its work in 1956, did not suggest deletion or modification of article 370, it therefore became a part of our Constitution, and this position was confirmed by the Supreme Court in 1970. The agreement has not brought about any new situation as regards article 370.

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* Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's observation, "What? Please quote".

I am not saying it cannot be changed....*

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This is what I said earlier also**. From what I have said about this article, it is clear that there is no question of any surrender, as alleged in some quarters, nor is there any loosening of the ties that bind the Centre and Jammu and Kashmir State. This is clear from the very fact that no such consequences flowed during all these years since article 370 was incorporated. It is not correct to allege that this will create a precedent for other States. A distinctive constitutional features in respect of Jammu and Kashmir is that it has its own Constitution supplementing the Union Constitution and the specific provision in article 370.

There is some talk of mysterious, secret, clauses. I said the other day—and I should like to repeat—that there are no such secret clauses.

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I first saw Sheikh Saheb in 1934 leading a procession. He was sitting on a pony so small—I do not know whether the pony was small or it merely looked small in comparison—that his feet were hardly off the ground. Even so, he managed to look dignified and every inch a leader. He was attracted to the message of national freedom, civil liberties and religious equalities which our national movement propagated and this became the guideline of his own National Conference which mobilised the people of Kashmir. If he remained with India and enabled the people of the State to cast their lot with India, it was because of our party's ideals and policies. If we had followed the policy of the Jan Sangh I do not think the people of Kashmir would have chosen to accede to India.

Hon. Member Shri Shamim has already spoken on this subject with emotion...(*Interruptions*).

A reference has been made and is being made to subsequent events. There is no point in harking back on past misunderstandings and past mistakes. There were some internal developments which necessitated certain action. When we found that there was a change in the approach we did not hesitate to open the door to reconciliation and cooperation. I should like to draw the attention of hon. Members who talk about any other dialogue to this last sentence. The opportunity was provided by Sheikh Abdullah with his readiness to join the mainstream of national life and to bring his experience and idealism into the task of strengthening the democratic and secular fabric of our country.

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* Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remarks, "Now there is no Constituent Assembly in India, so the Constitution of India cannot be changed or amended ? That is no argument".

** In reply to Prof. Madhu Dandavate's remark, "It is as permanent as any other article".

Sheikh Abdullah has categorically stated that he always believed that the well being and the future of Kashmir lie with the Indian Union. His reiteration that accession is not an issue and that plebiscite has become irrelevant has had beneficial consequences. Even those who had expressed reservation on the fact of accession have now come to accept its finality. The decision of the Plebiscite Front to change its objectives and its name sets doubts at rest. The existence of the Plebiscite Front had encouraged hostile elements outside the country. This should now end. But it is true that this does not mean that there will be no hostility. We have to take it in our stride and meet it. I have no doubt that Sheikh Sahib will do so.

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I certainly hope Shamim will help*. Why not? I should like the House to show its appreciation of Sheikh Abdullah's vision. This latest example of his statemanship is worthy of his record as a veteran of our freedom struggle. We should not underestimate his difficulties and he should not underestimate the difficulties we face here. Perhaps that was why it took us long, so that we could create an atmosphere in which an agreement and understanding of this kind would by welcomed by almost all the people. We have succeeded in this. It is up to us to see that this atmosphere is not changed or damaged in Kashmir and it is also up to us to see how we can help Sheikh Sahib in every way in overcoming the difficulties which he will face.

I should also like to refer to the constructive part played by Mirza Afzal Beg during the discussions. His deep knowledge of the law, his sound political judgement were invaluable in reaching a satisfactory and realistic accord. Syed Mir Qasim played a notable part in negotiations through his self-effacing devotion to the larger interest. Shri Parthasarthi showed great patience and was ably assisted by Shri Balakrishnan. Sardar Swaran Singh's knowledge of the political scene and his vast experience with negotiations stood him in good stead in dealing with this delicate task.

I am glad that our hon. friend Shri Mavalankar referred to Mridula Sarabhai. I should like to inform him that before her illness, we had discussed these matters and she was aware that an understanding was being reached. So it was not as if she were in the dark regarding what was happening. I know that she was very happy at the outcome.

We are all deeply concerned with the development of the two regions of Jammu and Ladakh. Dr. Karan Singh gave an account of the work undertaken in Jammu. Kushak Bakula who spoke just now felt that nothing has been done for Ladakh. This is not wholly correct. There has been development, but it is true that it is nowhere near adequate. I have taken special interest in these areas and have been visiting these regions regularly, even the most outlaying areas. During the discussions with Sheikh Abdullah I made it a point to mention the anxieties and difficulties of these regions and of certain sections of the people even in the valley. In recent months Sheikh Saheb himself has toured these regions and he assured me of his own awareness and his desire to treat all regions equitably. The composition of his Cabinet reflects this concern for Jammu and Ladakh.

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* Replying to Shri Piloo Mody's remark, "With Shamim's help".

There is a special situation in Jammu and Kashmir not only because of its own Constitution or of its Muslim majority but, as Dr. Karan Singh rightly pointed out, it has been the main battle field during repeated aggressions against us. All the three regions of the State have borne the brunt of the attack. All sections of the State population have fought valiantly for the national cause. I should like particularly to mention the brave Gujjars, Bakarwals and Gaddis. These are communities which have suffered much poverty and hardship. They deserve all the help we can give them by way of education and employment. I hope adequate attention will be given to their problems.

I do not think I need well on the other points raised in the debate. As I said, most of them have been answered. I should like to revert to the point I have already made, that the understanding has to be viewed in the larger context of the need for adopting a conciliatory approach in resolving problems facing the country. A problem that has been with us for a generation should be solved when we have the ability and opportunity to do so.

Although the Opposition loses no occasion to attribute motives to us and our Party, it has always been our endeavour to solve problems in the larger national interest. It is obvious that in this case also our party unit in Kashmir and our party at the national level has not thought of its own interest but only how to consolidate the unity and strength of our country.

Let us not expect miracles and an immediate total ending of tension. Much as we all desire this, life is a series of problems. And solutions give rise to new difficulties of one kind or another. But an achievement based on understanding and confidence strengthens us to face challenges. It is in this spirit that we should look at this understanding. Once again I should like to thank all the hon. Members who have given it such warm support and shown appreciation of it. A few have not but the vast majority in the House and outside have shown appreciation and support and I thank them all. On behalf of you all I should like to send our good wishes to Sheikh Abdullah in the tasks ahead.

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*Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I beg to move that the statement regarding Jammu and Kashmir delivered on 24th February, 1975 in Rajya Sabha be taken into consideration.

The agreement reached with Sheikh Abdullah has been received with great applause in the country during the last two weeks...(*Interruptions*). Why do you feel ill about it ? It is not only a political agreement but also a luminous example of goodwill that has impressed the masses of the country overwhelmingly. Sheikh Abdullah has taken charge of his new assignment. As the hon. Members are well aware, he visited Delhi, called upon a number of his friends and took part in discussions on political level. A new chapter in the history of Jammu and Kashmir has been ushered in. I am quite confident that if we follow the path of co-operation and confidence, it will certainly be good for the State and also for the entire nation. This way, the other problems that are cropping up, as such life

* Moving a Motion for the consideration by the House of the Statement made by the Prime Minister in relation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, *R.S. Deb.*, 12 March, 1975, cc. 163-64.

is not free from problems, can also be solved satisfactorily. Much has been said on this subject. Right now, I do not wish to say anything more. In case, some new issues come up during the course of the debate, I would respond to them after the discussion. I hope that the House will accord its approval to this agreement and convey its good wishes to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.†

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*Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to the House for the warm and well-considered support it has extended to the accord with Sheikh Abdullah. In so doing, the House has accurately reflected the sense of satisfaction which the country feels in regard to this understanding. People have welcomed it not only because of the positive benefits arising out of it but also because of the manner in which a long-standing problem has been resolved by mutual discussions in a spirit of good will. This act of reconciliation is a fine example of the political maturity of our country.

My colleague, Sardar Swaran Singh, has made my task easier in his spirited speech he has dealt with all the points raised, ably and lucidily. But I shall have to repeat some points, otherwise I may be misunderstood. But before I get on to those points, I should like to say that much of the credit for this achievement goes to Sheikh Abdullah. Only a person of his commitment to the good of the country could have been capable of the will power to overcome memories of past bitterness and unpleasantness. A lesser man could not have done this.

Jan Sangh has received a drumming from most speakers, from our party and others. So, I shall not add to it. But, Sir, they have come out with their usual stereo typed arguments and unjustified apprehensions. I can understand their discomfiture at the approbation which the country as a whole has given towards our action. Our concern is not so much with what people say but with what strengthens the country and I have no doubt that this understanding strengthens and benefits our country.

An hon. Member rather gleefully referred to the Simla Agreement, implying thereby that the agreement had perhaps failed. No one had expected or predicted a miracle. But there is no doubt that the Simla Agreement demonstrated to the world our conciliatory approach, our serious desire to settle problems peacefully and to improve our relations with Pakistan. The several agreements on travel, communication, trade, etc., are in pursuance of the Simla Agreement and are of obvious mutual benefit. There are others who are not pleased with the agreement and a reference to this has been made by practically every speaker in the House, and these are the rulers of Pakistan. Mr. Bhutto has written to me and has told the press in Islamabad of his strong protest against our action. Frankly, Sir, I fail to understand what the protest is all about or in what way the accord runs counter to the Simla spirit. With due respect, I should like to say to Pakistan that it has overplayed

† Translated from Hindi.

* Replying to the debate on the Motion regarding the Statement made by the Prime Minister in relation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, *R.S. Deb.*, 13 March, 1975, cc. 205-13.

the Kashmir card. It is no longer a trump in their hand and they should desist from using it against India.

Our policy in national as well as international affairs has been consistent. I know that Mr. Bhutto regards consistency as a quality of mediocre people, but I think that it is better for people to know where one stands and if one stands by ideals and values, then it is better to be consistent about them. We have always tried to adopt a conciliatory approach and settle problems through discussion. There is no reason to assume that the Government will give up this policy in relation to any particular problem, provided the others concerned also adopt a conciliatory approach. Positive benefits from this accord have accrued because of the policy of understanding and cooperation adopted on both sides. The agreed conclusions should not be weighed merely in the legal or constitutional balance. The substantial political gains are that misapprehensions which had been entertained, rightly or wrongly by certain sections in the State, have been removed and plebiscite becomes a non-issue. Both these are solid benefits. In regard to the legal and constitutional provisions, the attitude of adjustment and accommodation has to be seen in the approach to the provisions rather than the provisions themselves.

With reference to article 370, which has been a specific provision incorporated in our Constitution from the very beginnings a section of the people in the State had the feeling that it was not being worked in the spirit in which it was conceived and that serious inroads had been made into the State's powers. In our view, this is not correct. It was pointed out during the discussions that article 370 was being operated strictly in accordance with the procedure set out in it, but we cannot ignore the existence of such misapprehensions and the need for removing them. The agreed conclusions seek to do this by reiterating that article 370 will continue to govern the relationship between the State and the Centre. The purpose is to reassure those people who had doubts in this matter, but as I have said on an earlier occasion, it does not change the situation. In other words, the position has not changed because of this declaration. As regards residuary powers, the accord makes no change in the existing position. They have been with the State from the very inception and the accord gives a reassurance to the State that the constitutional provisions in this regard will continue to be exercised by the State. This position can be altered only in the manner provided in article 370, namely, by a Presidential order made with the concurrence of the State Government. When an occasion arose to invoke the residuary powers to enact a parliamentary law to deal with secessionist and similar activities, which may challenge the unity or the territorial integrity of India, the State Government readily agreed to a modification of the provision in order to enable the application of this law to that State. In the course of discussions it was conceded that the Centre should necessarily have this power to deal with such unlawful activities and that the modification made to the constitutional provision was justified. We are confident that if a similar occasion arises in future, the State will appreciate the need for the Centre having necessary powers to act and give the required concurrence.

As is well known, Sheikh Abdullah was keen on a review of all Central laws which were applied to the State after 1953. During the course of discussions it was pointed out

that Central laws on matters in the Union List are generally essential for the effective functioning of the nation and can be reviewed only by Parliament. As regards Central laws on matters relating to the Concurrent List such as welfare measures, procedural laws, etc., the Constitution itself provides for the State Legislature to modify or repeal such Central laws after obtaining the President's assent. The accord provides reassurance to the State Government that its proposals in this respect will be considered sympathetically when they come up for assent. By the way, we usually consider sympathetically proposals that come from any State. The particular socio-economic conditions and other special features of the State of Jammu and Kashmir will be considered by the Centre in dealing with such proposals.

Shri Prakash Vir Shashtri has tried to draw unwarranted conclusions from my use of the word 'experiment' and my stress on the need for vigilance. Every country, and particularly one like India which has faced enormous problems and had special experiences, must always be vigilant.

I should like to congratulate Shri Goray on his excellent speech. He has been able to appreciate the essence of the matter. But he also took the word 'experiment' in a very narrow sense. Aren't all actions experiments, ultimately? No solution can be perfect. As I have said on many occasions, every solution itself gives rise to new problems. But what is the point of resurrecting the past? The past does raise questions; sometimes it answers them also.

By quoting from Sheikh Saheb's statement Shri Mariswamy has answered at least one of Shri Prakash Vir Shashtri's questions. In any agreement, one must be willing to forget and forgive. But in this particular instance, one irrefutable fact stands out and this fact has been mentioned by many who have spoken. More than any other person, Sheik Saheb is responsible for Kashmir's being with India. He provided the leadership to the popular movement which fought against the two-nation theory in the State and rallied the people to our national cause. I do not have to read about events. I was in the thick of them myself. Sheikh Saheb always strongly opposed Jinnah and the policies of the Muslim League. I remember, when Maulana Azad was released and came upto Kashmir, Sheikh Saheb had arranged a very big reception and public meeting. The whole city was out in welcome, except in one mohalla which was the stronghold of the Muslim League. Here they threw all kinds of things and generally tried to make the occasion as unpleasant as possible. But Sheikh Saheb and his colleagues and the people left no doubt as to where they stood and what their attitude was.

When Kashmir was attacked, it was not the then Government of the State which defended it; on the contrary, they were simply unable to cope with the situation. It was Sheikh Saheb and his colleagues who mobilised the people, who built up the people's militia and faced the invading hordes. I cannot forget the sacrifices and sufferings of the people of Kashmir and how courageously the young, untrained, unequipped people faced this challenge. I cannot forget the young Maqbool Sherwani who was caught by the Pakistanis and actually crucified on wooden cross.

While consultations were going on in the Government of India as to our own attitude and future action, there was a meeting in our house. I felt so deeply anxious and involved that I squatted just outside the door, waiting for them to come outside and announce their decision. I do not know if Sheikh Saheb remembers but that evening he phoned me, not once, at least twice, to urge me to expedite decision, so that Indian Forces could be sent immediately. To brand those brave people as communalists would be a grave travesty of history.

I was astonished that Shri Prakash Vir Shashtri should have expected us to take the House into confidence at various stages of the talks. This is never done nor could any negotiations be concluded successfully if such talks became public at earlier stages. In this particular case there has been no policy change nor any need to amend our Constitution.

Some people feel that no speech of theirs would be complete without dragging in the Soviet Union. There is absolutely no truth in the allegation that the Soviet Union has had anything to do with this or any other decision which we might take. Their friendship has been demonstrated by their support to our decisions without any attempt at interference.

So far as the Plebiscite Front is concerned, as my colleague, Mr. Om Mehta has said, the Executive has met and supported the understanding. The General Body has not met officially because it is difficult to call it in the present weather conditions obtaining in the Valley but the opinion of the people was evident from the welcome which Sheikh Saheb got in Srinagar. One cannot say if some people will not remain obstructionist. But this would make no difference to the value of the agreement or the new chapter which has been opened.

Sir, I have been anxious for this agreement and have already given my reasons for this. But it is not true to say that there was no democracy or concern for the people and development before, or that the people of Kashmir were not with us. Several members, have spoken, Shri Om Mehta and Shri Yunus Saleem spoke moving of their own experiences. Members from the Opposition have also mentioned the heroic role played by the people of Jammu and Kashmir in resisting aggression not only in 1947 but on later occasions. All regions have borne the brunt of foreign aggresion and have stood solidly by us in times of travail. All of them equally deserve the nation's gratitude.

Sir, much needs to be done. But there is no doubt that the Valley has made progress. Jammu and Kashmir is a State with a difficult terrain. This, combined with the tension for repeated attacks, has aggravated the problems of development of the regions which comprise the State. But the Central Government has been paying special attention to the problems of Jammu and Ladakh. There are many tribes and groups in these areas as well as in the Valley itself who have specific problems of their own. The Valley has Gujjars, Bakarwals and Gaddis who have their own difficulties. I discussed these questions with Sheikh Abdullah and he assured me that he is fully aware of these problems and has given the people of all the three regions assurance of equal treatment and of equal opportunity for participation in the political affairs of the State.

Shri Mariswamy let his imagination run away with him when he tried to reconstruct the reasons for the recent changes in Maharashtra. I have no hesitation in saying that there is not an iota of truth in his version. He has also raised the issue of State autonomy again. He seems to challenge the statement which I made that while we need a strong Centre there is nothing in the Constitution to stifle the initiatives of the State.

The States complain of delay in giving Central clearance to some of their projects. And there is some justification in this, I must admit. The situation must be remedied and we are trying to remedy it.

But often other States may also be concerned in some way or the other, and likely repercussions have to be taken into view. But the instances which the hon. Member gave were neither substantial nor relevant to support his case for greater State autonomy. What was involved in those matters is hardly a question of the authority of the State or of the Centre. Ecology, climate and such larger matters are sometimes affected. To give an example, if a State allows large-scale felling of trees, the effect is far-reaching and long lasting. We should make our people conscious of such issues. He spoke about a temple and I would like to tell the hon. Members about this particular matter. A few years ago, the Tamil Nadu Government wanted a statue of Raja Raja Chola to be installed inside the Tanjore temple. It was a modern, large-sized statue. The Archaeological Survey suggested another place outside the Maratha Gateway of the temple. The Tamil Nadu Government initially agreed to this new location. But later Shri Annadurai asked the Center to re-consider it. The archaeological Survey then pointed our that the statue would not harmonise with the original structure and would, therefore detract from its archaeological value. The Tamil Nadu Government later put up the statue outside the fort wall on the main road, well away from the temple, with an inscription that it has been installed there because the Central Government had not permitted inside. There was also a reference to the Varaha Murthi temple inside the main temple. Now, this is an active shrine, attracting large numbers of worshippers every day. It has its own plinth, but the shrine is very small, causing considerable inconvenience. So it was agreed that an enlarged shrine should be built on the plinth. This was done under the supervision of the local Superintendent of Archaeology. Unfortunately this gentleman permitted a rather ornate "shikhara" to be built over this shrine, presumably in response to local pressures. The Archaeological Survey is unhappy about this and I believe an explanation has been asked for from the person concerned. Art and architecture are not matters of political autonomy but should take into account our historical traditions. All over the world today there is greater consciousness about the need to preserve national treasures in their original forms, for these treasures belong not to a region or even to a nation but to mankind as a whole.

Shri Mariswamy also said that constitutional amendments had taken away the rights of the people. This is an astonishing interpretation. On the contrary, the purpose of most of our important amendments to the Constitution was to secure social and economic justice to the weaker sections of the people rather than to perpetuate the privileges of a few. And so far as I remember, his party supported these amendments when they were put to vote here.

There is no need for me to say more to commend the understanding, for people have already extended overwhelming welcome to it. It is an accord which is good for the State and good for the country. It strengthens our national ideals of secularism and democracy. I am sure that the House will give its good wishes to Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues and to all the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Sir, before I sit down, I would like to tell the hon. Member Shri Rasheeduddin what a delight it was to listen to his speech. I do not know how far his barbs, so pointed and apt, went home to those against whom they were directed.

Thank you.

Situation in Assam*

Sir, I am sorry I could not be here earlier. I was either busy in receiving the French President or was in the other House where the debate on the President's Address has started. I deeply share the concern of the hon. Members. The situation in Assam requires very careful attention and going into some depth. I have not heard the other speeches. I have heard hon. Shri Bhupesh Babu's remarks just now. It is true—and I agree with him—that this situation could have been prevented if earlier information and proper handling had been available right in the beginning. However, it is no use harking back to that time. Now we are in the midst of an extremely serious situation where there is violence of a very cruel and, I should say, almost primitive kind, the way in which Mr. Maitra and some other people were brutally murdered. I believe there was some criticism of person I sent. That person was invited by some people in Assam. Since he was going I thought that he should be reinforced and, therefore, we also sent Shri Shanker Dayal Sharma, who has been the Congress President and who has been in touch with Assamese matters earlier also. Their visit was a useful one. Perhaps they did not meet all the people they should have met, but still they met a very large number of people and helped our party. They went on behalf of my party to get a much clearer view of the situation. In the meantime, I had asked the Governor to come here and had detailed talks with him. Perhaps the House knows that just before Parliament began its sittings, I had a meeting with the leaders of the Opposition and we decided that the leaders of the national political parties in Assam should be asked to come here so that there could be a discussion with the leaders of the Opposition here in Delhi to seek a solution. We agree that this should not be considered a party matter or a Government mater, but should be viewed in a much broader light. So I am in touch with them and we are trying to fix a date. In the meantime, I had received a request to meet the students. But before I could respond—because this was actually before I was sworn in—they had returned to Assam. After that, I sent a message. I believe there is some concern there why I approached the students and not the other groups. I am willing to meet anybody who comes here. Because I had initially been given a message and told that it was from the students, I had sent a reply to them. But the situation is a serious one and essential supplies are not reaching various places, apart from the violence and the sort of posters about which you yourself have mentioned. No problem is insoluble. Assam has many wounds and the root cause is largely economic. Communications are not as good as they should be. As I said, no problem is insoluble but we must assure that no one should incite

* Replying to the Calling Attention regarding the deteriorating law and order situation in the North-Eastern region of the country, *R.S. Deb.*, 25 January, 1980, cc. 67-69.

people or to inflame the situation or even, I would say, to lay blame because at this moment if we blame anybody that may complicate the situation. Without naming any parties, I should like to say that some very serious allegations have been made against some parties. We do not want any of these things to be talked about because our major interest is how to defuse the situation, how to calm down the people, how to meet their genuine fears and how to see that there no injustice is done.

Different sections of the people are calling different people foreigners. So, who should be called a foreigner, is a matter which we have to decide. Obviously, people who have lived for years, have voted, have struggled with us, have shared our joys and sorrows cannot suddenly be termed foreigners. If there are any real foreigners, certainly we should decide what should be done. If they want to stay in India, they should be rehabilitated; if Assam does not want them, we have to consider other places. So there are many aspects of the problem. I can assure the House of our deep concern and that we are in constant touch and we are trying to have a meeting as soon as possible so that we can have the ideas of different sections on the various matters. Thank you, Sir.

Demonstration in Bengal over the Situation in Assam*

I was present in the House yesterday when the hon. Members were expressing their concern regarding the demonstration in Bengal. I would have spoken then and there but for the fact that other Members raised other issues and started shouting in most unparliamentary language.

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We sympathise with the genuine grievances of the Assamese people. At the same time, we are also aware of the hardships which the agitation in Assam is causing to certain sections of the people in Assam itself, in West Bengal and to other parts of the country. We cannot ignore the genuine apprehensions and fears which have risen in the minds of people in West Bengal and the fact that emotions are running high there also. The Youth Congress merely wishes to give expression to his widespread feeling.

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Indeed the Chief Minister himself has called it a just cause, and I seem to remember—I cannot locate at the moment where the news appeared—the Chief Minister mentioning some time ago something about the mounting concern of Bengal at the continuing agitation in Assam. On Wednesday I had already conveyed to the House my own and the Government's desire that nothing should be done which could lead to an aggravation of the situation either in Assam or in Bengal. (*Interruptions*)

The Youth Congress has itself issued a press release appealing to all its members and others not to indulge in any action that might worsen the situation and has urged that the moves that we here in Delhi have initiated for finding a solution to the difficult Assamese problem should be supported. This news has also come over the Radio this morning, and I am sure that this counsel will prevail.

Our report says that yesterday's strike in schools and colleges was peaceful. I think all parties recognise the need for restraint and I certainly hope that not only will the situation in Bengal be peaceful, but also that the students and youth of Assam will appreciate the concern felt in other States and the difficulty which all the people of India are experiencing, and respond by showing responsibility and moderation.

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* Statement regarding demonstration in West Bengal over the situation in Assam, *L.S. Deb.*, 21 March, 1980, cc. 263-65.

Agitation in Assam*

Sir, as I said earlier, I have to apologise to the House for not being able to be present here. But I have read through the resume of the speeches which have been made. There is nothing very new that one can say on this subject. We are all deeply concerned about what is happening in Assam and what is happening in Tripura. Although the two are connected, they are two different problems, different motivations, and so on. So far as Assam is concerned, I am not going into all the points. I just want to comment on a few things which have been raised. There is no doubt about the gravity of the situation. My friend, Shri K.C. Pant, gave the example of a fire. How do we put out that fire ? That has been my concern. One hon. Member, Mr. Kakati, said that although I have given only twenty minutes to the students in Gauhati. I had given three hours to the minorities. This is how misunderstandings crop up. I have seen the students on three different occasions and only in Dispur I was a little short of time. Even then I did see them for more than twenty minutes. But previously I had met them for quite long periods, for as long as they wanted. After that the Home Minister spent hours with them. Again and again certain Members have said there should be a dialogue, there should be negotiations. We have not stopped the dialogue. We have taken the initiative in arranging these meetings. In fact, Mr. K.C. Pant contradicted himself. First he said there should be a dialogue; then he said the Prime Minister should not have been introduced into it. I was not introduced....

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I know, But the students insisted that they wanted to see me.** Should I reply 'no', I do not want to see you, and give them an excuse to say that she is not seeing us and therefore we cannot agree to anything? They wanted to see me and therefore I met them. Their first request was: will you come to Assam ? Naturally I said, 'yes, I shall come to Assam'. Maybe, it was wrong of me. But it was a little enough to accede to. But first we met the Opposition leaders, this the students held as a grievance. It was also said, that as I was going out of the country and yet could not find time to visit Assam; this shows that I am not serious about the problem. I did not go with much hope of any solution, because gradually I was coming to understand that there was a deeper motivation. I am not accusing the students. I do not think that this is a students' movement. They are in it but they are

* Participating in the debate on the Statutory Resolution seeking approval of the Proclamation issued under article 356 of the Constitution in relation to the State of Assam, *R.S. Deb.*, 11 June, 1980, cc. 189-210.

** Replying to Shri K.C. Pant's remark : "There are many levels of dialogue".

being used as a facade. They are sincere in what they want. But there are other undercurrents. It is not possible to pinpoint them exactly. But they are there. And the proof of it is, which I think the Home Minister mentioned in the other House and also Shri Makwana, that on several occasions they have agreed to certain things or they themselves have put forward a formula to which we have agreed. But after an hour or so they phoned and said, "No, this cannot be done." Therefore, it did seem as if somebody else was prompting them. When the students meet me, it is as if it is a deputation from some foreign country because they insist on the conversation taking place through an interpreter. At the last meeting in Delhi it was clear that the interpreter was not interpreting me properly because we also had an Assamese speaking person. We found that the interpreter was leaving out large chunks of what I was saying and when we pointed this out, he assured us, "I am just going to do it; but listen to this student first". Somehow, in a roundabout way what I said was not fully conveyed. This is not terribly important, but it does give an inkling. Now I have disgressed from the main thing. So, although I had meetings in Dispur with AASU and with Gana Sangram Parishad, the only long meeting was with the representatives of the political parties. I did not look at my watch and so I do not know how long it was; but, as hon. Members here are all in politics, they know that we tend to speak more than any other group or any other profession in the world. So that was a longish meeting and that put my entire programme out of gear. So for Nowgong I had very little time left. One hon. Member has alleged that I spent three hours with the minorities. Actually, the total time I spent in Nowgong was 40 minutes. Some time was taken in going to and fro the helipad and in the rest of the time I met several deputations apart from having a talk with the Governors' Adviser. All this was in 25-30 minutes. I certainly met a deputation of the minorities also, but I doubt if they had more than five or six minutes, the same time as the others. I have read that some leaders, not here in the House but outside, have alleged that there is something mysterious about this meeting and some deal was made. Now it was not a private meeting. The Government people were sitting there. As we had all missed our lunch, in the meantime some people were trying to bring tea etc. The room was so small that while I was meeting one delegation, one delegation was in the process of being hustled out and another one was trying to force its way in. So there was some confusion. Nobody can say that it was a private meeting. It was as public as if sitting outside.

Now nowhere have I called the students anti-national. It is very laudable effort on the part of Shri Pant to say that no one in this country is anti-national. Then who is bringing out the posters ? Who is saying, "Get out, you Indian dogs". All I have said in my public and private statements is : why can't those who are in favour of an amicably peaceful settlement condemn such actions ? There has been no condemnation. I put this to the students also. And when I talk about the minorities, I do not mean merely the religious minorities but linguistic and provincial, and many of the people whom today the Assamese are considering foreigners. A very pertinent point was made in the other House today : What does the Government mean by foreigners. The real meaning of foreigners is those people who are not Indian citizens but are citizens of another country. But here we have a very special situation. On one side is whatever was said before the creation of Bangladesh. But once Bangladesh came into being, the sort of atmosphere created did change the situation. Many refugees came and at that time we accepted them. There is no secret or

otherwise pact between Mujib and myself on this issue, but some talks and letters were exchanged between our the then Rehabilitation Minister, Shri Khadilkar, and his counterpart on the other side and it is true that they agreed that only from 1971 onwards will we ask people to go back. But to say that I am not willing for negotiation is not correct. There has been no confusion in my mind or in my words. I have said very clearly that I am not committed to any date. How did we say 1971 to start with ? We had a meeting of the leaders of the Opposition parties in Parliament. They are the ones who suggested that we should stick to 1971.

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Along with the Assam party leaders*. Everybody did not entirely agree. One person did not agree. One person stayed quiet. But all the other stressed 1971. Afterwards we wanted to know whether the students were willing to move from 1951 at all. They were insisting on 1951 and nothing else. This was the question. It was the Governor's idea that he probe their mind. On his own he suggested 1967. But he made it clear that he had not discussed the date with us. He was first trying to find out whether they were willing for a spirit of give and take. They rejected it. Once they rejected it, there was no question of our considering that date. We were told that they were sticking to 1951. Have I given any date to them ? Only at that time. When I found that the students were regarding it as a hardening of our attitude, I said, "Let us forget about it. Do you want the work to begin or not ?" We cannot begin deportations today of persons from 1951, even if Government were to agree. Government has not agreed but, even if we were to agree, we cannot do this. Physically impossible. Therefore, I said, "If you want this problem to be solved, let us make 1971 the starting date, not the cut-off date but the starting date of deportation. And my argument was that there was no controversy about this date, either with the Opposition leaders or Bangladesh or anybody else. And also I said that along with this, anybody else who should have been deported earlier or who was deported according to earlier orders or if he was on the list of being deported and either not been deported or had gone and returned, then, he should also be sent back. That was my proposal to them. It is not because I am saying so myself but I do think this is a very fair proposal. I said, "Do not think that I am trying to gain time or use it as an excuse to force you to end your agitation. Therefore, while this deportation is going on, simultaneously we will go into all the other questions. But you withdraw the agitation for the simple reason that it is not possible to have negotiations when here is anger and fear in the minds of the people". It is not just that the minorities are a little agitated. They are in such fear of their lives that you have only to look at their faces, you do not even have to listen to what they say.

I am not interested in who goes and gives reports. And particularly regarding the institution that has been mentioned, a lot can be said into which I do not want to enter. The matter had come up in the previous session of Parliament about their donations from outside. So, we are not interested in their opinion in these matters. In fact, we do not even know what their intention was.

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* Responding to Shri P. Ramamurthi's remark, "Along with the Assam party leaders."

The agitation has not been non-violent. Again and again the students repeat that it is non-violent. But it is not only Bengalis who are being killed, it is not only the other minorities who are being killed but the people of Assam are also being killed. People who have no other connection with any place ever, have said that they are forced to be in the agitation because they dare not say that they are against it. If I name them, their lives will be in danger. I have their names. This is the situation.

What happened at the very beginning of the agitation ? I have got to remind you that at the very beginning, the agitation started in July, 1979 or round about that time. It had gone on for many months before we came on the scene. That is no excuse for us. I am just pointing it out because sometimes Members have a short memory. At the beginning of the agitation–this has been given by one of the groups who came to meet me–the members of the AASU guided the foreigners' eviction operation at Phukong near Gauhati, where two tribal cultivators, Habib Ram Boro and Debu Ram Boro, decendants of the Latchet Soldiers who defended Assam during the Ahom rule from aggression, were brutally killed. This is just one example; there are others. I do not want to go into them. Now, our argument with them has been on the definition of a foreigner ? People who have adopted Assam as their State for hundreds of years, are they foreigners ? May be Bengalis still wear saris, but they have made Assam their home. They have helped in its development. But if there is propaganda "You throw out these people, you will acquire the land, you will get the jobs", naturally the movement will become popular. But it is not a thing to be encouraged. In fact, it is not going to work in that way either, as we have seen in other situations. We have had previous experience of such agitation on a smaller scale. It does not help in giving greater employment. Greater employment can only come through greater development.

With the students we spoke also about development programmes, about economic programmes. Government of India have formed a special Ministers' Group and also a special Secretaries' Group and we are willing to immediately take programmes in hand. But do they want any of the programmes to start now ? I put a small proposal. Our Health Ministry approached me that there is a special, virulent type of malaria which affects only that part of the world, that is from Assam and a belt right across Asia perhaps up to Cambodia. It is fortunately not in the rest of India. I said, "Carry on with your agitation, but let this anti-malaria programme go on in your State so that people are not affected." They were not willing. I said, let us send a team or two, which as a small token, because they cannot go into every village, and to destroy the larvae you have to go to every village, spray every pond and so on. Now when our team went, an Assamese official is reported to have said that he did not want their interference. He said, "Do you know whom you are talking to ? You are not talking to an Indian. You are talking to an Assamese citizen." Again this is only one example. There are worse ones which I do not want to say here. This is the situation. This is the atmosphere created by the agitation. Are the students in control ? I do not know I honestly cannot say that they are in full control. Shri Pant rightly said that we should separate those elements who are sincere and who are bothered about the grievances of the Assamese people from the others. But no effort is being made for this. No separation at all is visible between those people. We know what happened to a person

who works in a bank, for instance. He is an employee; he does not own it. He was asked by two girl students to close down the bank. He said, "Well, I am just an employee. It is my job and I may risk my job if I close down". Then the Assam Police came and said, "You close it down or else we will see". What could he do ? He closed it down. That is not a non-violent way. And it certainly was not the students' agitation which was closing it down; it was the force of the police. And a large part of the Assamese Government machinery is behaving in a similar manner. The Governor tried very sincerely. No body could have been more accommodating than he was. And this is why he is in trouble. In the other House they were all shrieking for his removal. He is in trouble, because he thought he could separate the two elements, the genuine ones from those who are openly being anti-Indian. This is not hidden. Their posters, their slogans, their talk with people–this is not hidden.

Now, our figures of the dead is 150. But I am told by some groups that 510 people are missing mostly of the minorities and they believe them to be dead. I do not know whether it is so. An instance was given that on the midnight of the 28th. AASU volunteers–there were some people who had been beaten up and were in hospital–took away in injured boy from the hospital and murdered him by extracting his eyes and crushing his knee and elbow joints. They also did not leave the heart in the body. The body was returned home by the police personnel the next day. There are other such instances. Is this non-violence ? Even then we say we do not have closed mind.

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I am not giving it as my statement. I said these are some of the incidents that are being brought in our notice. There are others who are dead. We know they are dead. I met the relatives of some of them. If they are alive, you produce them. That is all I can say.

Again, I would like to tell the hon. Member–who made that statement–that I did not have a single meeting in Patna district. He was talking about a speech I made in Patna. I may tell him that I did not have any meeting in Patna....

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He referred to a speech supposed to have been made in Patna. This is not so. He can easily verify it. I did not go to Patna. Surely a visit cannot be hidden. Either I went or I did not go....

...The fact remains that I did not go to Patna.

Furthermore, I have never said the movement itself is anti-national or that sort of a thing. I do not know whether it was the same member or another who repeatedly quoted me as having said, that it is an out and out anti-national movement. I have always said that there is a segment which seems to be anti-national. As far as I know, others have not condemned them. This is my grouse against them.

As I said, so far as we are concerned, the dialogue is on, we still are and always will be willing for talks. We are interested in finding a solution. There is one other point I want

to make. It is understandable that the Assamese should be sensitive to the question of their identity as every group is. And we in India have encouraged this. We do not want everybody speaking the same language, everybody having the same religion; we do not want to regiment people. We have always believed in diversity strengthening unity instead of weakening unity. But are these Assamese boys equally sensitive to the desire of the tribals to keep their identity ? Shri Pant is aware of this. (*Interruption*) It is because they are not willing. And the same thing is happening now. Within Assam the tribal people orginally went along with this movement but now they feel that they are the ones who are going to be crushed, their language will be lost, their personality erased. This is what is happening....

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There are many other things. Now, the number of people injured–2000; the number of persons rendered homeless–more than 20,000; arson, more than 3500 houses or huts burnt; about murder you have heard of Dr. Moitra of Oil India. Then, Shri Niyogi of Arunachal Pradesh, he just gave a lift to a few students in a truck and he was murdered on the way. One lady, an Oriya lady, was asked to pay money. By the way there were a lot of forcible collections. This old lady was asked to give money. Either that old lady did not have money or she did not want to give money; so they cut off her nose and she bled to death. Many people are still untraced.

Naturally we have to go by the Constitution. We have to see that there is no great burden on Assam. Everybody agrees. But how do we relieve that burden ? I must say to the credit of the students, when I put these problems to them, they did pause and think about them. As I said even if we wish to remove them, people, where are we going to take them ? Which state will they go to? How are the arrangements to be made ? It is easy just to talk about 51 or 61 or any date. It involves a lot of other considerations. While this atmosphere is there, it is not going to work even with regard to industries. Suppose I go to a businessman today and say "you put up an industry". Will he put up one in Assam in this atmosphere ? The Assamese will ask : "Who is this foreigner who has put up this industry?" I am not talking in the air. I had such a conversation.

It is easy to support an agitation without seeing all its consequences. There is the question of refugees. Those who are born in India are Indian citizens. What about their old parents–old father and old mother? Can we say : "Their names are not in the citizenship register and therefore throw them out." Where are they going to go ? When we say we are going to move all those people, are we going to shoot them dead ? How are you going to deal with them ? These are not statistics. These are men, women and children. Unless you look at it from the human angle and unless you find out who are the people involved, how are you going to solve it ? The problem cannot be solved just by talking about it. You have to come to the table with a calm attitude. I think you can ask the students. I have always spoken to the students like another, wanting to help them individually, as a group and as a State. Whenever I have talked to them they were on the point of saying 'yes'. This is with regard to the starting day of 1971. I put it to Assamese professors and to Assamese lawyers. I asked them what more could I have done ? They said : You are right. But we have no choice and must join processions. A situation has arisen where we seem

to be going round and round. The extremists may be a very small segment. Outsiders may be playing a role. Outsiders, as we know, do not work through foreigners coming here. They work through the local people. This small segment is getting the upper hand over this agitation. This is what is bothering me. I am not doubting the sincerity of the Assamese people. Nobody wants their language to be submerged. Nobody wants their culture to be submerged. As I said to them, it is not by shutting your mind that your personality grows. It is by contact and meeting other people and so on. What is India's strength ? As sung by Iqbal, how has Indian civilisation, of all the civilisations of the world, survived thousands of years ? Because we have kept our doors open; because we had adopted new ideas, welcomed them, absorbed them and sometimes changed them into our own. This is what has helped us. We never said : This is India, nobody should come here. When we lost to the foreigners it was at times when we shut our minds and did not take to new technology. Then we became weak. When we accepted people we grew stronger. I am not saying that more and more people should come into Assam. I am not saying that. But the attitude of being against everybody is not helping them. This is what has created the problem earlier with the tribals. It has come up again. Only yesterday I had a group of tribals to see me. They were just as excited as others with regard to their rights. They say : What has happened to our language ? Why should we learn Assamese ? If the Assamese were not taking a chauvinistic attitude, these people also would not have felt like this. They were talking Assamese; they were learning that language. Therefore, you have to see how all these things in that context react on other people. If they say 'we stick to 1951' what do we do ? Is it physically possible ? Some of you have experience of administration. Is it physically possible to start doing from 1951 ? It will take years and years before you get anything done. If we start with 1971, we can start immediately. This was what I suggested. But they say : We do not want to hear 1971. Let it be a few years back. But when they say 'only 1951', then the doubt does come in my mind whether they are serious about solving this or not serious.

There is no contradiction between my thoughts and what my colleague, the Home Minister has said. We both feel that there are times when a firm attitude has to be taken. If you had met the minorities or the tribals or the other people, you would have a better realization of the situation. By minorities I mean not only Muslims, they were also Hindus of different States, they were Nepalese. The Nepalese have another problem because, until 1976, we had allowed them to come in. We never told them that they could not come. They say, "How can you apply 1971 to us ? If you want to throw us out you can at the most start from 1976." So, if you talk to them, you will understand the real feelings. The longer an agitation of this sort continues, the more it is in the interest of those who are not for India's strength and welfare. We all know that there are such elements in the world, not just against India, but against other developing countries. Are we going or encourage them ? I am not going to play politics. I have mentioned in one or two of my speeches about the Jana Sangh and the RSS who now call themselves the BJP. Anyway to me they remain the Jana Sangh and the RSS, no matter what new name they assume. They are encouraging the movement. The statements by Mr. Deoras and others are very clear on this. Nobody has denied them. A few speeches were made here strongly supporting the movement. I am not making any kind of division, I mean, not division, but distinction.

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*The Register is not a very authentic document.**

About the word I used, which has been objected to by the hon. Member***. I am prepared to withdraw that. I do not mean it in the sense in which the hon. Member is taking it. I was specifically talking of the language at the moment....

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My point is, if you insist that people should learn Assamese it is resisted. Just as the hon'ble friend opposite objected to Hindi. (*Interruptions*) I do not know whether since joining the Janata Party, he has learnt it or not...(*Interruptions*)

Therefore, I have no objection in withdrawing that word. I am prepared to agree to anything, provided that the lives, limbs and property of the so called minorities are safe-guarded and their fear is removed. While fear is there, even if the agitation stops, it will not be a normal situation. And fear also makes people react.

There is another point he made–about the minorities who called me their leader, I do not know what they said. They may have said it. But I had no information about their procession or what they were going to do, until it took place. To me they expressed the fear that their lives were in danger and that we must send impartial people...(*Interruptions*)

Another point made was that once the AASU tried to identify foreigners themselves they turned out to be genuine Indian citizens, with one exception. Everybody is so excited there...(*Interruptions*)

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The farther back you go, the longer it will take to be effective. That is why we advised to start from 71 and in the meantime, we can talk and see other meeting points. That would give assurance to all of their safety and the genuine citizens are not going to be thrown out.

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* Commenting on the observation made by Shri Dinesh Goswami.

** The National Register of 1951.

*** Responding to Shri Dinesh Goswami's observation, ...the Prime Minister has used the words, "chauvinistic attitude of the Assamese people". I will beg of her not to use these words because these will naturally hurt the sentiments of the people of Assam.

The Country is Higher than Any Movement*

Sir, I did not want to intervene in this debate.* All the points that could have been made have been made from both sides. I have been so deeply anxious about this whole question, and today my heart is so full of sorrow that I can hardly speak. Every life that is lost, whoever it may be, hurts. We can find no words of comfort for the people I have seen in the various camps. I have visited camps in which there were Assamese people only, camps in which there were tribals only, camps in which there were minority communities and in some they were mixed. But if I have got up, it is because my name has been quite unnecessarily brought into this debate. The Opposition was very excited just now. I do not know what these documents are, I do not know whether they are accurate. But I do not know that such opinions have been expressed. They have appeared in newspapers. Some I have read and they were also repeated to me by the Assamese as well as others when I went to Assam. I do not know who has propagated such ideas. But the talk of blood bath and other such provocative pronouncements are current amongst the people there.

I shall first dispose of some of the small points, it seems that Shri Vajpayee is much concerned about the clothes I wear. I might inform him that I am deeply committed to each group in India maintaining its cultural and other identity and from that point of view, in order to show that we do not consider that one dress is superior to another or more beautiful than another, I have been wearing the costumes of different sections as far as possible. I have been wearing Mekhala not just when I went for the Assam election, but since 1955, if not earlier. I have worn it in Delhi, I have worn it inside Parliament and I have worn it in foreign countries as I have worn the Garodress the Jammu dress and various other costumes depending, of course, on the climate and the occasion. It was also said that I made a speech in Bengali. If I knew Bengali well enough, I would have spoken in Bengali, but unfortunately I don't. So, when one section of the public said, 'Please speak in Bengali' I spoke one sentence saying that 'I can understand Bengali, but I cannot speak it well enough, so I shall speak in Hindi'. That was the extent of my Bengali speech.

So far as the ending of the speech is concerned, I do vary the ending of my speeches depending on what the people will respond to. I have tried hard to get people to respond to Jai Hind in some parts of the country. They do not always do so. So, you have to say what they will respond to. Usually, in my meetings in Tamil Nadu–I must say I do not approve of their anti-Hindi Policy but I do approve of encouraging all our different State

* Participating in the debate on the Statement made by the Minister of Home Affairs Shri Prakash Chand B. Sethi on 21 February, 1983 regarding Assam, *L.S. Deb.*, 22 February, 1983, cc. 338-47.

languages–in Tamil Nadu I say *'vanakam'*. In all States if I happen to know some local words I try to use them. In Assam I also said *'Namaskar'* in some places, 'vande mataram' in others. In some places I shouted Jai Hind. In one place I felt that a section of women who I had been told understood Hindi, did not seem to be understanding a single word. So to create a sort of rapport I said 'khuda hafiz'. I do not think that there is anything wrong in my saying this. In the Khasi hills, I say 'God bless you'. That is what they say and I respond. This is not political in any way. If we want to encourage our people and want them to feel one with us, we have to adopt some of their phrases and do other things which would make them more conscious of our unity and assure them that it is not a unity of unequals. All people have an equal right to their language, their costume and customs and their culture.

Then, I think some hon. Member has accused me of saying that nobody would be sent out. I have said no such thing. I reiterated what I have often stated and which has been my offer to the students even when I met them in Dispur. That 1971 would be not the cut-off point but a starting point and thereafter we could peacefully discuss what else could be done. That has been my consistent stand and the base for the talks that have been held. I have pointed out to the students and in some of my meetings the great difficulty of moving large populations. Perhaps, you have read what has recently happened in an African country. So I asked where will we put these people ? One cannot just announce–'I am going to send these people out.' Where will they go? Which State in India will accept them, which country outside India will accept them? This is the question which I posed to the students and at that time they agreed with me that it is a major human problem. I also said that those children who are born here, and I think our Constitution declares that those who are born after 1950 (since the Constitution was made) are Indian citizens and we cannot send them out. I have said nothing beyond that–what I have been consistently saying either in the House to the agitators or anybody else. But it is true that the minorities, and they are not only religious minorities, there are also linguistic minorities, there are Nepalese, there are the tea garden labourers and above all the plains tribals. All these people were greatly frightened not just now after the massacre but throughout these years, and their fears have been increasing. The plains tribals have been coming to see me off and on for the last two years to say–for God's sake take us out of Assam, make us a separate State, give us Union Territory, do anything you like, but please do not leave us with these people. This is the atmosphere that has been growing.

Just now, my friend spoke about refugees who have gone to West Bengal. Yesterday I had a long telegram from the Chief Minister of Arunachal. Nepalese, tea labour and others have crossed over to Arunachal, so he requests our help to sort out this problem and see how to look after them. He is concerned because he does not have the facilities.

There is much debate on the calling of the elections, I do not want to go into this matter now. It has been adequately replied to. I shall only remind hon. Members opposite that violence was growing in Assam even before the elections. Year by year, it was growing. There were many murders. There were threats to officials who went from other parts. There was sabotage. A large number of people who belong to different religions and different

ethnic groups felt threatened. What is equally serious is that the agitators are trying to inculcate such feelings in their neighbouring States also. These are all border States and you can realize how dangerous the security position of India can be if such attitudes permeate into these other States, the tribals States, namely that only local people can stay and everybody else would go out ? Actually one of the issues the plains tribals raised was "Who are the Assamese ? We are the original people who lived here. They have come from outside." These are not my words. These are their—"They have come from outside and pushed us in the jungle and in the hills." Of course, this is true of all Adivasis and not only in Assam, the adivasis are the original inhabitants of this country.

Even now, officials are not allowed to work. It is not true to say that no Assamese wanted to cooperate in the elections or before. I know many who did cooperate. But they have to think of their children and their families. When they were threatened, 'if you do this, well, you will not escape and your family will not escape', you know, normal persons will think ten times before they give co-operation or go to cast their votes. Unfortunately, this has sometimes happened in other parts of India also. Sometimes people who are considered weak like the Harijans, I have seen with my own eyes that because some voted, they were beaten up. Now, if this sort of thing takes place, it is not a fair judgment on what the Assamese wanted to do.

I know that the Assamese people are greatly agitated. My friend here has said something which seems to have offended. I am sure he did not mean to offend anybody. He was talking to me yesterday in the plane. How full his mind was and his heart of the tragic situation in his State. But before elections, names were being struck off without verification.

Now, we have offered tribunals. We have offered several suggestions to find some way out–it may be not totally satisfactory. In such a situation, you cannot satisfy everybody. But let us try and find a way which is least disruptive of Assam and least harmful to the Assamese or to any of the others concerned. But because the agitators did not want their officers to cooperate with us, even at that stage the steps which could have been taken at the border could not be pursued. But all that was neglected and could not be done. From the Centre, we tried our best. But we have to depend on local officials. If local officials do not cooperate with the Centre, then work cannot be done.

It was the same with development. When I met the students and others in Dispur, they complained of insufficient development. It is true that Assam, other hill areas in the U.P. and elsewhere are more economically backward because of lack of communications and various reasons. We have to make up for lost time. Immediately, I spoke to various public sector people. I spoke to our Finance Minister and to private industrialists that even if it caused some loss, they should put up something in Assam. Some people agreed. But then, the violence started and the agitators tried to stop the oil. So the industrialists said, "How can we put up an industry in Assam ? Tomorrow, they may burn the factory; they may tell the workers, don't work or don't allow goods to come out. How can we?" So, what development could have been taken up was also hampered.

As we know, the Voters' List now used in the 1978 list when Members from Assam were elected either to this House or that House. They did not complain in 1978 that they

would not be elected because the list is incorrect. My colleague, Shri Mukherjee has explained how the decision to have the elections was taken. I do not want to go into the points that have been raised.

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Well, he has said it publicly.* This matter was raised by Shri Vajpayee when we met the leaders of the Opposition in another connection. At that time, as I was replying, some representatives of other Opposition parties confirmed what we have said.

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The elections were held to uphold our Constitution. It was a constitutional obligation. In the present situation, as my friend there has said, all sections have suffered. Some may have suffered more and some a little less. All have suffered. And more than that it is the State which has suffered. This is the attitude which is alienating the people from the State. Assam was a big State. It could have stayed a big State. But somehow, one by one, people wanted to separate and a situation was created in which we had to come to some understanding with these different groups.

Now, another point I made at my meetings and at the meeting where I said *Khuda Hafiz*, that I regard all the people, especially young people, in Assam as my children. Even those who are angry with me, even those who are following a path with which I do not agree and which I consider is wrong, I consider them my children and therefore, I cannot disown them or say that we shall have nothing to do with them. We must continue to find a way. At every meeting, whatever its composition, I made the point that we must continue to try and bring them around to peaceful talks and try to create an atmosphere in which all can meet.

Even on the question of foreigners, I had told them that it can be solved, if they remain peaceful and do not raise a hue and cry. When such a hue and cry was raised, immediately, Bangladesh said, "We will not take back even the post-1971 people." If this matter had been dealt with in a cool and collected manner, maybe we could have found a way out. In all our talks with them, we have assured them that we are deeply concerned about the preservation of their culture, their identity and how to expedite development in the region.

To come back to the elections, it is the democratic right of all citizens to be allowed to vote. We did not stop voters there, others stopped them. Somebody has remarked that the elections were held at gun-point. The elections were not held at gun-point to ask people to vote. The guns were pointed at the people who were coming to vote by those who did not want them to do so. Some of the Opposition people there and some of the agitators were the ones who were trying to do things at gun-point. We did no such thing. But unfortunately there were some groups, whatever their motivations, who threatened and finally this led to violence on this tragic scale.

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* Replying to some hon. Members' remarks : "Mr. Mukherjee has not spoken here. It might be in the other House."

The question is : can any group anywhere in India, no matter what their grievances, hold the country to ransom ? Can any group say, "Our demands have not been fulfilled and because you are not fulfilling our demands we will not allow you to have the elections or we will not allow you to do something else"–there are plenty of demands; every group has a demand; many of them are justified demands but we cannot fulfil them because of lack of resources or for some reason. The country will go to bits. If we cannot hold together, we cannot meet the real challenges. But for the atmosphere of terror, many more Assamese as well as others would have voted and co operated in every way.

Another question which arises–I do not know what Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and others have said about it. Have they condemned the violence that is taking place ?

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Never mind, I did not take your name or anybody's name*. I am expressing the general feeling there. Wherever I went, people mentioned this. How is it that those who support the agitation do not condemn the violence. I have myself asked some opposition people at a much earlier period before there was any question of elections. Then they claimed that there was no violence. But we had the list of the people killed. At that time, they were mostly officials. I did not get a reply at that time either. That was at least a year ago.

But today, I do not want to dwell on all these matters because I feel that we must avoid all types of acrimony. The first consideration is the safety of all those who are menaced. We must ensure that relief is adequate and reaches all affected people.

Why did the tribals react ? Their areas are rather cut off and the agitators came and broke the bridges. So, whatever little did trickle through, would take even more time to reach them. The bridges were broken, it is true. They should be repaired. Some of them have been quickly repaired, for people to be able to get across.

We must help to rehabilitate those who have lost their all. We must express our sympathy for them and the agony of our hearts for the parents whose children have died, for the children whose parents have died and those who have lost all their worldly possessions. We must co-operate in creating an atmosphere more conducive to harmony and peace.

Many new communal organisations have cropped up. I do not want to mention names. But I do put it to the House that : Can these strengthen either the majority community or our various minority communities ? They can only aggravate an extremely delicate and difficult situation. These are some of the matters which we have to consider immediately.

I am sorry that some people have attributed motives that we wanted to win the elections. Naturally, every political party wants to win elections. It is something natural. But I have

* Replying to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee who intervened and quoted from the report which said that in the speeches at a meeting at Gauhati Judges' Maidan, the leaders appealed to the people of Assam to shun violence and continue with their non-violent movement and non-cooperation with the Government. He also suggested that the Prime Minister could call for a report from the Government of Assam about his speeches.

always said that is not the most important thing. But the important thing is how the elections are fought, the important thing is that the country is higher than any party. The country is higher than any movement also or any of us here. This is what I say.

So let us try to strengthen this spirit of unity and nationalism. Those who have struggled for freedom can understand when there is a danger to freedom when there is a danger to unity. The freedom movement bound us together. Now the dangers are no less and we need the same spirit to hold us together. And we know how quickly it can be damaged and weakened.

I spoke about nationalism. I should like to make it clear that I am not referring to any chauvinistic or narrow-minded nationalism but one that can keep us together, that can strengthen different communities, groups, sections of people who live in India and take us on to an internationalism where we can together solve national as well as international problems.

I do hope that this House will look at these points and create an atmosphere of co-operation.

Sarkaria Commission*

Sir, the Government have been considering for some time past the need for review of the existing arrangements between the Centre and the States. While keeping in view the social and economic developments that have taken place over the years, such a review will take into account the importance of the unity and integrity of the country for promoting the welfare of the people. The Government have accordingly decided to set up a Commission under the Chairmanship of Shri R.S. Sarkaria, retired Judge of the Supreme Court of India to go into these matters.

The Commission will examine the working of the arrangements between the Centre and the States and recommend such changes in the said arrangements as may be appropriate within the present Constitutional framework.

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Sir, this is a matter, as one hon. Member has pointed out, which has been engaging our attention for a very long time. Various States have been raising this issue. **In fact, we took the decision sometime ago but, as you know. I don't like making announcement when there is any agitation in one place or another. If the announcement has been delayed, it is purely on account of various agitations. Since there was some relative calm just now and also because the Rajya Sabha is adjourning, that was the reason for urgency. Otherwise we were planning to do it in the Lok Sabha a little later.

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* Making a Statement regarding setting up of a Commission on Centre-State relations, *R.S. Deb*, 24 March 1983, cc. 291, 300-02.

** Responding to the questions asked/clarifications sought by Members. Shri Dinesh Goswami sought clarification on whether the proposed Commission would be one-man Commission or there would be more members. He also wanted to know whether pending the report of the Commission, the Government would have an Inter-State Council (under article 263) as proposed in 1967 by a Committee headed by Mr. Setalvad.

Shri P. Ramamurti *inter-alia* wanted to know whether the proposed Commission would be competent to suggest Constitutional Amendments.

Shri L.K. Advani *inter-alia* wanted to know whether instead of the proposed Commission, the possibility of setting up the Inter-State Council under article 263 was examined. Secondly, what were to be the terms of reference of the Commission? Shri Era Sezhiyan appreciated the move to make an enquiry into the relationship between the Centre and the States. Taking the States as equal partners in the Indian federal set up, he requested to make the terms of reference comprehensive so that a purposeful study would be made which would go a long way in the healthy functioning of the federal structure in this country.

Shri A.G. Kulkarni inquired whether the Commission would deal with inter-state problems and whether it would also deal with financial aspects.

As I have said, the decision has nothing to do with any specific demand but with the general problem as it has been raised over the last few years. I should like to make it clear, Sir, that wherever I have spoken about a strong Centre, and I repeat that I am in favour of a strong Centre. I have also said that there cannot be strong Centre without strong States. I have also said that there cannot be strong States without a strong Centre. We are interdependent and the States are interdependent . What is the Centre ? We are completely dependent on the States. All programmes are in the hands of the States. Whether it is agriculture, industry, health or education, all the implementation is with the States.

So, if the States are not effective, the Centre becomes helpless in that matter. We have never believed in weak States or weak Governments. On the contrary, we want stable and strong States but they should also see the value of having a Centre which is strong enough to help them in times of need. Every State now comes up with demands either there is drought or some other catastrophe–and they want help. The Centre should be capable of helping them. This is also a very important aspect, the defence of the country's interests abroad and defence of the country's borders.

I should like to thank all hon. Members for their remarks and the support they have given to my statement about the unity and integrity of India. I am sure, Sir, that all of us agree that that is of paramount importance today. Any question, whether it is at the Centre or at the State level, this aspect must be kept in mind in every such discussion or review. If the country is not united and integrated, then neither the Centre nor the States can be strong or capable of solving the problems of their people.

The States will certainly be free. The whole point of the review is that States should put their point of view before the Commission. So, they will be free to express whatever they want to say. But, Sir, I don't think that article 263 is relevant to this particular matter. It is with regard to inter-State disputes and so on and it is intended for these purposes.

One hon. Member said something about resources. Now all the States are free to raise resources. Our complaint is that they do not use that power to raise resources within their States.

So far as the financial aspect is concerned, I want to remind hon. Members that in various speeches over the years, not just in the last two years but even long before that, I have been making the same points about unity and integrity as well as about my willingness to look into any genuine problem of the States and also to take any step which should be required for that. As regards finances, this point will also be put before the Commission. We are only worried, and we feel we should be careful, that our finances should be used in such a way as does not damage our overall economy. That is our major consideration in this matter. The Commission is free to take the advice of experts.

One hon. Member mentioned that the States have growing responsibilities and limited resources. But I am sure he will concede that the Centre is in exactly the same position. The burden is growing, the demands are growing, but the resources are not keeping pace with them, and some States have not helped out to the extent to which they could have if they had made a real effort.

The terms of reference will have still to be decided in consultation with the Commission. I was a little astonished to hear what my friend opposite said about the Constitution. We had very eminent people going into the drawing up of the Constitution and ultimately it was accepted by the Constituent Assembly made for the purpose, and by the entire people of India. The Constitution has been amended when we have found there is need for it; and that provision is within the Constitution itself. That is why we have made it clear that whatever the Commission does should be within the framework of the Constitution. Some of the details have to be discussed.

I think I have answered all the points.

Situation in Punjab and Haryana*

Sir, this discussion is on a grave and serious matter, one which has brought shame to India, one which is contrary to all the ideals for which we have fought, for which we have stood and which we put before the world. This debate, I thought, was meant to find a way out of this sad situation, to find a way in which we can lift it above party politics, to bring it to a national level, to try and heal the wounds that have been inflicted, to offer sympathy to the families of those who have died, to those who have suffered humiliation of any kind, to those who feel that their religion has been insulted. Our country is one which is not very different from other countries so far as problems go, but it is unique in one thing and that is its spirit of tolerance. It is unique in this that people of all religions or most people of all religions respect the other religions. The Hindus go to *dargas*; they visit well-known churches; they go to gurudwaras. And I know Muslims also go; as do Chirtians. I have seen this myself in Tirupati people of all religions coming for different functions. This is a scene which will not be found anywhere outside India. I think that this is not so merely as an ideal, but because the Indian people have realised that with our great diversity, because we have so many religions, so many castes, so many regional customs, languages, and so on, such tolerance is the only threat that can bind all of us together, that can give us the unity, which will give us the strength to solve our problem, to maintain our freedom. I thought this was the purpose of this debate. Because I have been in the other House and the debate started at exactly the same time, I could not come here earlier. I was sorry to learn that many of our friends opposite took this opportunity, just like any other opportunity, to put the blame on the Congress Party. As I said in the other Home, so far as I am concerned, I have been the but of criticism, of beatings, of all kinds of physical, mental and other kinds of assaults since I was a small child—many of those who attack us now were not born then—but that makes no difference. The point I am making is I am used to it and this does not bother me, but it does bother we, it does worry me, that even in times of great emergency and challenges before the country today, people ignore the gravity of the situation, they do not see the dangers, which are within us, which are around us.

One of the criticisms most often made is why I announced our acceptance of the religious demands in the Bangla Sahib Gurudwara. There is nothing devious about it. I had already said what I could accept to the *Sants* when they came to meet me here. Therefore, when I was asked in the Gurudwara, "What have you done about these

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* Participating in a discussion on the Statement made by the Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs. Shri P. Venkatasubhaiah regarding the situation in Punjab and Haryana. *R.S. Deb.*, 28 February, 1984, cc. 420–28.

demands?" There was nothing wrong in my telling truth. I was not making any new announcement. It was only what I had already told the *Sants* in the course of our conversation here in Parliament House, Room No. 9, in—I think—1981.

The second complaint is that it is either I personally, or the Congress which wants to delay a solution. I should have thought that anybody who stops to think even for a brief moment, would realise that it was not in the interest of the ruling party to have chaos and trouble. It can only be to the advantage of the Opposition, of those who want to weaken the Government. It can never be in the interest of the Government to have division of any kind. Sir, there has not been any delay in that sense. If there was delay, then it took place much earlier. There demands are not new demands, so far as I know. When the Akali Dal formed the Government for three whole years in Punjab, when they were members of the Central Government for those years they had their allies in the Governments of the surrounding States, for three years was that too short a time to take up this matter settle it? And if that was short, how then do these two years become a very long time? Why were these issues not raised at that time? There would have been no problem and we, as the Opposition, would certainly not have opposed anything that was decided among all concerned. I am not going into the details of the demands because my colleague has already read out a lengthy statement. When the Opposition says that we are delaying, what it means is that because of the agitation, we must accept these demands. I should like to know from the Opposition; Is it their case that every time there is an agitation with violence and killing, we should accept whatever they want ? You are giving sanctity to all demands. But because there is agitation in one part, can you ignore the interests of any other State which is concerned? I do not condone what has happened in Haryana. I do not condone what has happened in Punjab. Whatever there is killing, wherever there is violence, wherever the self-respect of any individual is attacked, we condemn it in the strongest possible terms. We have always done so and we shall continue to do so. We do so now. My party has stood for communal harmony since its very inception. In fact, many of the attacks on us have taken place because we did not take the easier path of popularity, of agreeing to things which we thought were wrong. One of these was our stand on the minorities. I should like to remind the House that the minorities are not the same in every State. There are places where the Hindus are in a majority and the Muslims are in a minority, and there are places where the Christians are in a minority and there are places where the Sikhs are in a minority. But there are also places where the Muslims are in a majority, where the Sikhs are in a majority, and there are districts where the Christians are in a majority. So, I am for whoever is weaker, whoever is in greater need of help and whose voice cannot be heard, I am for helping that person. If India is the butt of attack in the outside world, it is because we raise our voice not only for ourselves, not only for our own needs, but also for the needs of other smaller and weaker countries. (*Interruptions*)

So, we have not delayed. Whatever our answer was to the demands, we have given from the very beginning. First, there were religious demands. When we broadly accepted them, I thought that the whole thing was over. We got up and I was saying "Namaskar", because I had spent more than 2 $^{1}/_{2}$ hours and was going to another function. Then I was

told that these were not the real demands, that the real demand was the water dispute. I said, "Well, why did you not take it up before, we could then have spent some time discussing it?" "I cannot sit now. We can discuss it at some other later point of time". When it was discussed later, frankly,—I should like to take the House into confidence—I was not happy on going back on an award which I had given, which was the second award. It was not the first one. Before that there had been another similar agreement and there were two awards. I felt, it looked rather silly to keep on giving awards which are disregarded. But, merely in order to come to a conciliatory and amicable agreement, I agreed. "If you feel strongly, we can go into it again." I shall not enter into details. But, on that particular issue also, the Akali stand differed from time to time. The demands also concerned other States. Then the Akalis said that they need not be included and so on. You probably know, even with regard to the religious demands, one which we accepted was later withdrawn. But because the river waters are of concern not merely to one State, it is not in my power to say that this should be the subject of an award, especially when the previous awards were being completely ignored. So, we offered to refer to a tribunal.

Then came the question of territory. On territory also, there have been differences. There was the Shah Commission which gave Chandigarh to Haryana. Then the matter came to me. I changed it and said that Punjab could have Chandigarh, but Abohar and Fazilka should go to Haryana, and this was agreed to by the then leadership of the Akali Dal, whether they were named Akali Dal at that time. I do not know because these parties keep changing names all the time and it is very confusing for us on this side. But they agreed. I am told by other people living in Punjab, Hindus and Sikhs, that not only did they agree, but they celebrated the event as a victory. Nevertheless, after some time, the issue was reopened. this is my problem. What I said to the opposition parties was that any agreement arrived at has to be lasting, it must take into cognizance the interests of the other States involved. We cannot do something for one State and let the other State suffer. If the States can come to an agreement by themselves, that would be the best. If they cannot, then let the whole territorial dispute go to another tribunal or whatever name you want to gave it, but to some authority whose decision will be accepted. So, the limited point remained that we should give Chandigarh now and let the other areas be decided later. Frankly, Sir, I felt that this was not fair to the other State; setting one part but leaving the other open. I thought that this decision should be taken together.

In this period, we have not sat quietly. We have had bilateral talks. We have had tripartite talks. We have had a lot of people coming as mediators, going back and forth to different people, bringing messages, sometimes a little contradictory, changing their stand. In all this time. Article 25 was not mentioned at all. Personal law was never mentioned. It was never mentioned in front of the tripartite meeting or anywhere else. It was mentioned to me by an individual who came to see me some months ago. He said that he was very close to the Akali leadership. I have no way of knowing whether he is or not. When he mentioned it frankly, Sir, I did not know what the article was. I said to him quite frankly that I was not a lawyer and that I did not know the exact words of the article. But if he thought that that would solve the problem, then I would have our lawyers look into it. But

then it was not raised in any meeting. Just now, the opposition leaders themselves mentioned that it was not mentioned before them at the tripartite meeting. Suddenly, it becomes the most important thing, overriding all the other issues. An hon. Member has just sent a note to me drawing attention to a fact which—nobody here has mentioned—saying that the explanation to Article 25, by which the Sikhs were included amongst the Hindus, came as a result of an agreement between Sardar Tara Singh and Sardar Patel because Sikhs wanted the same concessions for their depressed classes as the Scheduled Castes amongst the Hindus. It was then that the explanation was added and this is the part of the article to which the Sikhs or rather the Akalis are themselves a party. It seems to me to be a very strange situation. Perhaps you can understand it. But I do not understand it and it does seem as if there are some forces which do not want an agreement. An hon. Member said that we should meet the Akalis. We have met them many times. Whether we meet them again or not is not the point. The point is: Do they want a solution? Or are there some forces, whether they are extremists or who they are I do not know, who are preventing them from coming to an understanding. It is true that on several occasions, it seemed that we were on the brink of an agreement. But it did not happen. The opposition cannot put the blame on us. I am a consistent person. My philosophy, by policy, was made in my childhood and girlhood and I have found no reason to change it. As the world changes, one acquires greater scientific knowledge, one acquires new methods and one thinks new thoughts. But the basic principles do not change. I have always stuck to them. Here there is no basic principle involved. If there is, it is that the interests of all concerned should be kept in mind. This is the basic principle so far as I am concerned. As I said, we want a solution to be enduring and amicable. There must be some surety that people will not go back on it. You will remember, Sir, that in the Anadpur Sahib Resolution, there are opinions which, as my colleague has said, no Government and, I think, no people can accept because they go against the very concept of the unity and integrity of the country. The Opposition leaders have told us, "Now, they have changed their mind." I said, "Will they not re-open it after some time?" They were not able to give an answer to that. They said, it may be after some years. Sir, I may not be here in the House or the world after some years. Many of us may not be here either in Parliament or in the world. But India will be here. Can we do something now which will be harmful to India in future ? We cannot think only in terms of five years or ten years. We have to think of India in terms of hundreds of years. What people have done in the past is shaping us today. And what we are going to do will shape India's future.

Therefore, Sir, I welcome this debate, I do not know whether there was an argument here as we had in the other House. But the only reason for putting it off was not to hide anything, not to avoid any discussion but because a *bandh* had been declared in Delhi and the burning of the Constitution was declared by the Akali Dal. We felt that if anybody said any word which could be misconstrued, it might become a reason for a flare up and further killings. This is what we wanted to avoid. That is why we wanted to postpone this discussion for a few days. The *bandh*, I am glad, has passed off peacefully. But I am sorry to say that some of the posters that were brought out were extremely provocative, and it is a tribute to the other community that it did not get provoked.

Once more I should like to express my deep sympathy to the families of all those who have died, regardless of their religion and regardless of the reason for which they were killed. And I should, like to make a sincere appeal to this House that our democracy cannot survive unless we agree that there are some matters which are above elections, which are above party politics. There are some matters on which we must sit together. I had no reason to involve the Opposition parties in our talks. I don't think it helped me, quite frankly. But I involved them because I thought that it is a national issue and they should be involved.

Previously, there have been times when the whole of North India was in the hands of the Opposition parties when we were at the Centre. There was even a time, you will remember, Sir, I had a minority Government here in Parliament. But we never had this kind of acrimony, we never had this kind of bitterness. The Opposition parties fought us, we fought them in elections. They won sometimes : we won sometimes. They had their State problems. They came and discussed them. We always could sit together in a friendly way, and I could discuss national and international problems with them. Unfortunately, today, I do not know why the Opposition has taken a stand that they feel that this is no longer possible. So, although we meet and we talk, it is a superficial meeting. It is not a meeting where we feel that we are both attempting to solve a common problem. This is the need of India today. On this issue of Punjab and Haryana and on many other such issues we could and should rise above any other small interest and think only of the sort of India which we must together build and which we want so that our people keep their faith in our system. People will want to strengthen only that system which they believe is delivering the goods, and which will make the sort of India which is in their largest interest. Thank you, Sir.

Punjab Problem*

I thought that in this debate in view of the seriousness of the subject and the gravity of the situation, our hon. friends opposite would refrain from slander and false accusations. I thought that prejudice would not colour their remarks. Obviously I am not painting everyone with the same brush. But it is a fact that some people have made accusations and these accusations are not new ones. They have been answered—some on the floor of the House and some on other occasions. But the whole purpose of this debate—with apologies to some speakers—seems now to be and this we see outside the House also, for an effort to shift the focus from the essentials to purely subsidiary issues with a view to create confusion in the thinking of the people.

Much has been said by some speakers about the elections. Sir, we are not obsessed with the elections. Unfortunately, the Opposition Parties and Groups and, even the two Members—I do not know whether it is called a Group or something other than a Group—are obsessed. To accuse me and the Government of allowing the crisis to build up merely for electoral advantage is a compatible argument which needs no response.

...The deafening silence is not in the White Paper; deafening silence was maintained by those, who today assume the role of custodians of the interests of Sikh community. Certain remarks which I heard—I was not in the House but I was listening to every speech from my room—were far from responsible. Shri Indrajit Gupta just now said that we regarded the Akalis as the only representatives of the Sikhs. Sir, you yourself can think whether there is any basis in this. In the 1980 elections, when the Akali Dal was in power in the Punjab, who won the elections ? The Congress Party won the elections. Our Hindu and Sikh members won the elections. The Sikhs and Hindus voted for the Congress. How can we say that only the Akali Dal represents the Sikhs ?

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We dealt with them, and we met all the other Sikhs**, I personally met different sections of Sikhs. Several Sikhs and several Hindus organisations from Haryana and from Punjab came to see me. The larger number belonged to my party. But some came from other parties. I do not know whether any Communist Sikhs came or not. But, I did have talks with the

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* Participating in a discussion on a Motion regarding the White Paper on Punjab Agitation, *L.S. Deb.*, 25 July 1984, cc. 282–308.

** Responding to Shri Indrajit Gupta's observation, "Because you only speak to them and you deal only with them."

Marxist Sikhs leader who was very close to the Akalis and who maintained that they were the voice of the Sikhs.

So, let us not get side tracked by these matters. The Congress has always fought communalism of every kind. I am on record in this House if you will look back to the papers from 1966 onwards you will read how I have spoken against communalists; how I still am against any type of communalism, any type of extremism. Today, communalism has a new dimension and this is called fundamentalism. Even those countries where fundamentalism is supposed to have started are now worried about it and are trying to see how they can contain it because they are discovering the ill effects it could have there, but, in our country, we have to fight it all the harder because our society is far more vulnerable. This fundamentalism, let me make clear, is not in any one community. I am not referring only to Sikh fundamentalism but also to Hindu fundamentalism, to Muslim fundamentalism and even to Christian fundamentalism. Every religion feels that it has to take an extreme view. Sikhs are not considered real Sikhs because they don't belong to the Akali Dal. What do the Muslims say ? That those Muslims who are in the Congress or Communist are not real Muslims, because they do not belong to the Muslim League or to some other such organisation. This is what our party is suffering from because we have kept to our ideal of secularism, because we have kept to certain wider national goals and have not confined ourselves to any type of narrow thinking. We shall continue to fight any type of narrowness of thought, narrowness in the sphere of religion or in any other area. That is the basic Indian tradition. The Congress fought imperialism and today it fights neo-colonialism. It is no use making snide remarks because we do not name the countries or people. I do not name groups and I do not name any of you. I do not usually name anybody whether they are abusing me or whether they are praising me. Because the member spoke just now, I took his name. I do not think, anybody can challenge our record on this. The Defence Chief has gone to America or a minister went to Pakistan because we try to find an area of cooperation, we try to increase that area—this has been the basis of our foreign policy from the beginning. This does not mean we don't know what those people are doing. It does not mean that we don't tell them that we know what they are doing.

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We not only 'should'* but we have I have been told that people outside have noticed and remarked that there is one person who has said the same thing in different world capitals. I do not tailor my statement to suit the views of the particular country in which I happened to be.

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I have said what has been internationally acknowledged as India's policy.** Today we continue this fight. In fact, some of our problems have arisen because we are pursuing this fight. The hon. Member opposite and others should be aware of this fact. And with

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* Shri Indrajit Gupta remarked, "Should".

** Responding to Shri Krishna Chandra Halder's remark, "You are praising yourself?"

all our faults—being human we have many faults—and we do not hide our faults. Naturally we do not want to parade them although India does seem to parade its deficiencies and its shortages and its poverty—everything far more than any other country does. But nevertheless we have taken the country forward in every possible direction. When I say 'we' I am not referring to myself. I am not referring to this Parliament. I am referring to the Indian people. It is the Indian farmer, the Indian worker, the Indian scientist and Indian technologist who have increased our productivity. It is the Indian Army which has defended our borders against foreign aggression. So, when I say 'we' I mean all these people. Sometimes the opposition forgets this. They want to believe everything that those against us say rather than what the government says.

We are not talking on behalf of government does matter because it is the government which gives the direction. We do not swing from side to side like some people and some countries. We have set ourselves a steady course, the most difficult course of combining the best of the old with what we consider the best of the modern and in the face of the most tremendous odds and obstacles of every kind, to which I might add some of the hon. friends opposite sometimes contribute. We have not wavered. India has spoken and does speak not only for our people but also for the countless millions, the majority of the world's population and we have been willing to stop aside in order to help others.

Now, Sir, Professor Chakraborty, while concluding his speech yesterday said that the Congress having ruled the country for so many years forgetting that the three years in between were ruled by others—therefore for it was the Congress's duty to keep the unity of the country. Now, this seems to imply that national unity is a party issue. Is that what he is trying to say ? This is the manner in which it was projected. This is how it came out.

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National unity is a national issue and it is the responsibility of all political parties and all Indian citizens. The impression that I got when I heard the hon. Member's speech was that perhaps other parties can be free to play with fire but run away when the blaze gets too hot. So, for me and for my party, national unity and integrity are our supreme objectives and nothing can be allowed to come in the way of that, neither elections nor anything else. What is happening in Punjab was not simply a story of cruelty or merciless violence against innocent people. It was a concerted attempt by a combination of internal and external forces to encourage divisive forces and if possible, to divide the country. This was the challenge before us. Another hon. Member who spoke before lunch, who said that although the army had not been sent to other places where there was violence there why the army action in Punjab. The situation in Punjab is an entirely different one although there are links with what has happened in other border States.

Now, the question of the foreign hand is also mentioned. This was brought up earlier by several Members. We are asked for evidence we are asked to name the countries, the people and so on. Now, we are not sitting in a court of law. We are dealing with historical forces and movements. We are fighting for our freedom. During the struggle for our freedom, did we have any iron-clad evidence that communal riots were being provoked ?

We could not have. But we did discover after freedom that some of them were deliberately instigated. In fact, as I have said earlier, I met a high official at the time of Queen Elizabeth's Coronation who told me of his role in one such-communal riot.

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Imperialism as such has gone but we all know of the views which several industrial countries hold about developing countries; we all know of events in other countries. At this moment we can only guess. We cannot produce proof of what any body is doing. We can only judge from what is happening in other countries, what has happened on other continents. Those events have been acknowledged. They are no longer guess work. Some of us did human inkling and I spoke of it. I was hooted down by my own party members when I said something like that at a party meeting. Later, books appeared and evidence appeared describing what had happened. We can only judge from our political experience, from the knowledge of what is happening in the rest of the world. We must recognise the nature of contemporary world forces. There are well documented activities of external agencies in other countries. The question before us is : whose interests are being served by casting doubts on the role of these external forces ?

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Punjab is very much at the centre of it. That is I am speaking of these matters. Why should this collusion take place at this time ? The link between communalism and neo-imperialism are deep-rooted. India is among the few developing countries which is a democratic and secular State. India is also among the few developing countries to establish through planning which was at first so strongly denigrated in some parts of the world, a strong independent and self-reliant national economy. India is in the fore-front in the movement for peace and disarmament. India's voice is loud and clear for restructuring the existing inequitable relationship in international economy. India symbolises non-alignment and is its most positive force. Efforts to subvert our independence through open aggression through overt and covert pressures have failed. Because true to our tradition, the Congress did not succumb during the post-independence period to the pressures or blandishment of powerful forces.

So, now some other way has to be found to weaken India, and this is the true significance of events in Punjab. That is why, the agitations in Punjab, a sensitive border State, a State with a dynamic economy. In other parts of India also although these may have different reasons, yet there is some link between them. Can we ignore the remarkable coincidence of troubles in Punjab with the rearming of our neighbour ? Can we ignore the strong revival of secessionist forces in Jammu and Kashmir and those in Tripura and the north-east border ? In fact, not only in Tripura, but we have that problem in the whole north-east.

As I said, some are willing to believe the good intentions of everyone else except their own Government. To them these events may have no connection, but anybody else will see that they are closely connected.

The main point is–need the army have gone to the Golden Temple ? And how did we deal with the demands ? A name has been mentioned, and the person is now supposed to be a hero of the Sikhs. I do not want to go into this business. This accusation has been refuted; there was no connection between any person there and the Congress. If the press or some people say that two of our M.Ps won their elections because of him and so forth, I can say there is no truth in that allegation.... (*Interruptions*)

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This matter has been gone into yesterday and again today and I am not going to reopen it. But it has been very clearly stated that what the hon. Member has said is incorrect. There were internal quarrels amongst the Akalis themselves. We know, they were there before, they were visible even during the talks. And it is possible, I cannot be positive about this, but what, I have heard is that some candidate of his was defeated by some other Akalis in their own elections so to take revenge, they decided to defeat their candidate. That has nothing to do with us. Anyway, the question is about the demands.... (*Interruptions*)

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So far as the demands are concerned, I have made my views and my stand, which is the Government's on the religious issues clear from the second meeting at which the opposition was not present, the second meeting with me. When that meeting was over, they said, these are not the real demands; the real demands which had not been mentioned up till then were water and territory. Naturally, I said, if those were the most important demands you should have mentioned them earlier. We have sat for 2 $^{1}/_{2}$ hours today; we sat for, perhaps 2 hours on the previous occasion. Then I had some public function and I had to leave. So, from then on the religious demands were pushed into the background and these other two were brought forward. My stand on these has been categorical I have stated time and again and I think Shri Chavan or some one who spoke has also said this—that Chandigarh would go to Punjab.

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It could not go unless Haryana got something in its place*. Well, it is on this that we could not get any agreement. They were not willing to talk to the Haryana people. (*Interruptions*)

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Now, the question is that originally we had said that Fazilka and Abohar should go to Haryana, but once Punjab said, they wanted them. The question was what would Haryana get instead. Punjab said that we should give money for a new Capital. We have no objection. We said we would share the cost with Punjab, but we felt and I still feel that Haryana should get some compensation in land also. Now, this is my view. It does not mean two

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* Replying to Shri Indrajit Gupta's remark, "It should have gone by now".

or three villages which Haryana would get anyhow. This is what Bagriji must also have thought. He knows the posting. We could not get a lasting solution by starting an agitation in Haryana simultaneously. Therefore the two matters have to be balanced.

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It was not engineered.* It was well controlled as soon as it broke out. It was a tragic occurrence and we were deeply—I was deeply—distressed that our Sikh friends should have been harassed, their turbans taken off or whatever else was done. But as soon as we heard of the incident we took the strongest action and from then on it did not recur. But I am referring to that demand. Had we made a declaration that Chandigarh would go to Punjab while keeping the Haryana matter hanging, then there would have been trouble in Haryana. This is what I am trying to say. But just now I am not concerned with the demands that were discussed. I am concerned with the demand that was not discussed, which is the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. The opposition parties were not able to convince me that the Akali Dal had given up the Resolution entirely. All I was told was, "They will not raise it now".

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Whenever the Akalis were asked about this, they said—I do not know whether they used the word 'minimum'—but they said—that they had not given up the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. Furthermore, when I asked the opposition leaders who were present at some of the meetings about this resolution they confirmed that it had not been given up, it was only shelved. Shelved for how long, they could not say, whether that could be for three months, six months or one year.

In those circumstances I did not see any point in the Government officially announcing what it was agreeing to. What were we getting in return ? The Akalis were not willing to accept that there was terrorism from the Golden Temple. They were not willing to accept that there were arms in the Golden Temple. Vajpayeeji said that I asked them if there were arms. I did not ask them. The then Home Minister wrote to them to say that we have information that there are arms. We have information that in such and such room such and such wanted person is hiding, so please hand them over, so that we do not have to take any action. And that is why we repeated that we did not want the Police to go in, that we did not want to interfere in any way with religion. It is only when we came to a dead end that the army action had to be taken.

One word about the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. My colleague Shri Sethi made his statement in Parliament that the Akalis were changing their demands. In his reply Shri Longowal asserted that the Akalis had at no time given up the Anandpur Sahib Resolution.... (*Interruptions*)

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* Responding to a Member's remark, "It was engineered."

I am told that in July, 1981 Shri Tohra, President of the SGPC and Shri Gurdial Singh Ajnoha, Head Priest of the Akal Takht went on a tour of the UK and USA. We have reason to believe that they established contact with the proponents of separatism. I do not want to take names, you know the names prominent in the movement. From the Talwandi Group, the General Secretary and the former Minister in the Badal Ministry is reported to have sent an application to the United Nations for associate membership of the UN for the Sikhs as a nation. So far as we know, the application was more or less at the time of this visit to the countries.

We know how the Akal Takht and the Golden Temple complex were being used. And we know that at first this was denied. Soon after the Army action when I sent somebody to the Golden Temple, one of the important persons there said that he was in charge of the Akal Takht but of four months or so he had not been allowed to go there. He was in the complex but he was not allowed to go there.

We have heard of the feelings of the Sikhs. When I went to Amritsar, I was closeted with some of the authorities for a briefing meeting but some of those who had accompanied me went into the city and met a number of Sikhs and also Hindus. One taxi-driver said : "You people who were not living in Amritsar have no idea of what we have been through. I am a Sikh; I am a Jat Sikh. I am not basically a political person. I do not belong to any political party. But when I left home in the mornings; my family did not know whether I would be back in the evening. If there was a noise near the door, we did not dare open it." This was the atmosphere before the Army action. The further you go from Amritsar you find the atmosphere changes because those people do not know what was happening there. Such was the situation.

You say: 'Did the Government fail ?' Well, to some extent, it was a sort of failure. But what is the reality of the situation ? Because Police forces consist largely of the majority community of the State. This makes it difficult for them. They do not necessarily agree with what is happening but they are pressurised; not just they themselves but their families are threatened with death. Anybody who tried to help to find the terrorists or who gave information was killed, his family was threatened his family members were killed. Some days ago, just before Parliament opened, two Sikh women came to see me. They said : We have been here for some time, we wanted to see you but did not know how. I said : Well, did you contact anybody? They said : We did not know whom to contact. And finally, they thought of telephoning. They telephoned in the evening. They were given an appointment the very next morning. One of them said she was living not far from the Golden Temple. Three of her sons were killed in front of her. She said: I am an old lady, I have three daughters-in-law to look after. I have grand children to look after. I dare not go back, I do not want to go back to Amritsar. I was born there, I was brought up there, I do not know any other part of India but I do not want to go back to Amritsar. Please give me some place to live in Delhi or anywhere else. Such were the things that were happening there. So, when in spite of our best efforts, the police was not effective any more. And this is not peculiar to Punjab. We have been seen this happening in Assam. I referred the other day to the language riots. I was not in the Government then but I was sent there as

Head of Committee on behalf of my party. The question there was not of Hindus versus Muslims. It was between Hindus and Muslims who spoke Assamese and Hindus and Muslims who spoke Bengali. What did we find ? In those districts where the officers were Sikhs or where they came from South India, there was no trouble. But where communities, the officials were Assamese whether Assamese speaking or Bengali speaking, they were so terrified that they could not function. If a Bengali upheld the just case of a Bengali, they would say : 'No, he is a Bengali, that is why he is supporting him.' And I must admit that even a Bengali who was with me, whom I thought was well above such narrow mindedness believed that an Assamese could not be believed. This sort of atmosphere is terrible. This is what we have to fight together. It can not be achieved by Government alone. This is why in the National Integration Council in Srinagar, the minorities made the proposal of having a mixed force. I am sorry that we have not succeeded in having one. Something has been done to induct more minority people in the police force and other forces but I must confess it is inadequate. In Punjab there is one kind of situation, in U.P. it may be another, in Kerala it may again be different.

This is why people have confidence in the Central forces rather than in the local police. It is not that we want to interfere, that we want to sent the Central forces, but a situation is created in which there is confidence on those who come from outside whose families cannot be threatened. Some people want the army withdrawn from Punjab admitting that one or two incidents may take place. But others threaten saying. What will happen when the army goes away I do not want the army to stay there permanently. Of course, it is not going to stay. It should come out as soon as possible but we must, in the meantime, create conditions in which the people of Punjab feel safe, not only the Hindus but a large number of Sikhs as well. They may say something publicly but privately they have admitted that because they were against extremism, they are in peril. There is no day when I do not get letters with photostat copies of these threatening letters which people in Punjab are receiving.

All these things have to be kept in view....

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The army is already out from the main area, it is outside the *parikrama.** But a new situation has arisen, that of *kar seva.* We are trying to talk to every different group. It was our information that the Akalis did not want to repair the Akal Takht. They want to keep it as a monument for the future. Hon. Members can well understand that, if it is kept as it is, will it not increase the bitterness day by day ? This is the problem. Hence we felt that if one group is not willing to do it, somebody else should do so. Whoever is willing to undertake this task should do so. Frankly, I say that if nobody else does it, then the Government should do it. But is should be done, After that if the Akalis want to break down the Akal Takht that is their business. But, if it is broken because of our action, then we should see that it is repaired, that it is left in the condition—not in the condition in which we found it because when we entered it was full of terrorists and full of arms. I do

* Replying to Shri Satyasadhan Chakraborty who said, "Withdraw from the Golden Temple itself."

not mean that past—it should be a building which is as beautiful, as strong and complete as it was before the days of terrorism. This was our only motive in trying to encourage the *kar seva*. I do feel that the sooner this work is complete, the sooner it will be possible for the army to leave.

When one man takes courage,—and it requires a lot of courage, in the face of threats to do this seva, he is entitled to protection. People were allowed in the Golden Temple earlier, they went in thousands and thousands. I do not know what the exact situation is today. But there was a risk of people going in large numbers and women squatting to stop the work. This would create a bad situation. So, until some of the building work is done, full protection must be there.

However, even now the army is not in the main areas. They are not in the Harmander Saheb, they are not in the *Parikrama*, they are outside.

*** *** ***

They may be, I do not know.* They may or may not be. I said they have to in a position where, should the trouble arise, they can immediately control the situation and save the people.

When we were talking about *Kar Seva* some people demanded that the army must go out completely and ultimately suggested that it could stay on top of the gate. What can they do from the top of the gate ? They can only shoot. If they were put somewhere on the ground, they can stop the people or do something less drastic. These are some of the problems. If one goes into all the details, it will take hours and hours. These are some of the important points which have to be understood.

I am happy that people have praised the role of the army, the courage of the army. But an hon. Member of the other House who is not a member of our party made a rather derogatory statement. I know that we are not supposed to refer to the other House, but I have already spoken there and shall not get a chance to reply there. I must deplore his remarks. They are not conducive to bringing back harmony or for the national good.

Earlier people denigrated the police, I mentioned just now why the police was not effective. It is not just that they were terrified. But when people in responsible positions are denigrating authority, they cannot, at the same time, expect people to obey authority. There are two contradictory attitudes, you speak all the time strongly against the police. Naturally, the police wonder why they should act. If anything happens, the onslaught is on the police or on the para-military forces. It is demoralising for them as an open attack. The reinstatement of the police who were dismissed because of sabotage or other indiscipline will certainly demoralises the rest of the police, those who have stuck to their duty.

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* Replying to Shri Indrajit Gupta who said, "They are in the *Darshan Deori*."

These are many factors which created an exceedingly complex situation. The army had an arduous task and they did it bravely. We have praised the Army on many occasions, not only for their work in war time, but also for the efficient self-less work they do in peace time. Some of our Jawans have lost their lives or limbs in the course of food dropping in the North-Eastern area or in flooded areas. We do not want to use the army on every pretext or make them do the work of civilians but there are certain occasions when the use of the army is inevitable. As I said, the situation in Punjab was not an ordinary situation. It went far beyond any normal agitation or normal violence and crime.

As regards the Sant who is now guiding the *Kar Seva* and his attitude towards the Granthis, a journalist who cannot by any stretch of imagination be accused of partiality for my government or for me personally, wrote in his paper that the SGPC Chief had over-ruled the Priests objections and allowed the terrorist leaders to establish themselves in the Akal Takht and convert it into an arsenal. So, why accuse Baba Santa Singh.

Some hon. Members have asked why we delayed the action. It seems one cannot be right no matter what one does. We delayed it precisely because we did not want to take it, because we wanted some way out, some kind of understanding which would include the throwing out of terrorists, the dismantling of the arsenal and the ending of a situation which threatened our country's unity and integrity. It is because we were trying until very last moment, that we did not take the action earlier. But when we came to a stage when we felt that there was no other way, we had to ask the army to go in. I did not choose the day. I suppose various things were taken into consideration.

There is talk of a person becoming a hero and some people are trying to separate him from the other Akali leadership. The Opposition leaders, may know that one of the first demands of the Akali leadership was for Bhindranwale's release (*Interruptions*).

*** *** ***

It is mentioned in the White Paper.*

It is in the White Paper. Here you are all criticising the White Paper. You are telling us it does not have this and it does not have that, but it seems to me that you do not know what it contains.

*** *** ***

I think I have made all the points and my colleague the Home Minister, will go into the details. But the question is : now, what do we do ? And the first thing is that we should bridge any division between different Communities. We must, all of us, and this is the responsibility of all parties and all citizens of India, to heal whatever hurt is there. Not only our Sikh friends are hurt. All of us are hurt.

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* Responding to Shri Chandrajit Yadav's remarks, "He was released earlier than that. It was not in the tripartite meeting."

I myself was deeply painted in talking the action. You can ask my colleagues what I went through. Perhaps, this is the first and only time in my life when I did not sleep. But I felt that the step had to be taken in the national interest. And today we have been to see how we bridge the chasm that has been created the distances that have been created between one community and another. That is, our foremost duty.

We have to fight communalism of any kind because that is the greatest danger to our unity.

Where did this cry of separatism rise ? It did not arise in India. It rose far from our shores from people who are affluent. Some may be wanting citizenship of other countries. Many are actually citizens of other countries. Some may feel that this will bring them some advantage. Whether there were pressures or suggestions from others, I do not know. But this slogan is strongest today outside our country. We must meet this challenge as one nation as and one people. We should not bring in party politics.

Some people feel alienated. The Sikhs feel alienated for some reason. Other people feel alienated not because of religion but because of economics. There are many reasons for alienation. There is also alienation because some people suddenly became rich. They became alienated from the places from which they came and from their families. There are all kinds of alienation.

Our effort is to try to have a balance in the country so that we can pursue with our programmes and not only strengthen, but consolidate our unity to go ahead strongly on our accepted path of socialist development. We have to revitalise the tradition of our national struggle. We have to move the entire people. This is where we have to have a massive movement—a movement for unity has to be created, just as during the freedom struggle and even after the freedom struggle my father said—"Freedom is in peril, defend it with all your might", this is what we need today, to revitalise the tradition of our national struggle and to move the people by a vision of a new society based on equality and social justice.

The battle for secularism, the battle for unity is not only in our words. It must be in the hearts and minds of all our people. This we have not been able to achieve. At the slightest provocation we find some communal trouble arises or class trouble arises. We have also to remove the cause for grievances. But for this great task of building a strong and united India we have to rise above our narrow outlook and short term gains, look ahead to a future that is worthy of the sacrifices of those who suffered and laydown their lives for our country's freedom and its defence.

*** *** ***

It is really sad.* I am in constant touch with the Government of Haryana and the concerned engineers. I am trying to find out the latest position and the type of assistance we can render.

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* Responding to Shri Mani Ram Bagri's remark, "Bhakra Canal was breached twice, but you have not uttered even a word about it."

We have already expressed our grief here in the House as well as outside for the lives that were lost.

Some people insist that the security forces should be withdrawn from the State. Whatever was done within the Golden Temple did not eliminate the danger which is still looming large. We have to combat it. We all should sit together and decide how to go about it.†

† Translated from Hindi.

Dismissal of Shri N.T. Rama Rao's Ministry*

Sir, I have not come to challenge anybody or to accept any challenges. I have come to make a brief statement because so many misleading stories are being circulated. I am not going into the merits of the case in Andhra Pradesh. I should have liked to reply to some of Shri Advani's points, though I have not heard the beginning of his speech. My colleague the Home Minister and others will do so later. In view of what has appeared in the Press, what I have heard and what leaders of the Opposition parties have been repeating. I thought I should avail myself of the earliest opportunity in this discussion to state some facts regarding developments in Andhra Pradesh. Much heat has been generated by the hon. Members of the Opposition. Just now the House was witness to the sort of situation that is sought to be created in Andhra Pradesh itself. You can understand the intimidation and so on that is going on. (*Interruptions*) In Shri Advani's speech, he perhaps obliquely or not so obliquely wanted to point the finger at us. Now, I am not unused to this sort of campaign of character assassination which the Opposition leaders have now launched. Shri Advani has only to look at the back and present numbers of R.S.S. newspapers to see what utter slanderous lies, they have been writing about me. Not today but long before I was in Government because of my stand on matters. This is clear to everybody. The onslaught is in the same vein today—since they could not find any other cause—they have tried many ways to achieve Opposition unity. Now they think they can make this work. In earlier years also every possible subject and gimmick has been used by different parties at different times to vilify me and to discredit me. This is known in our country and it is also known abroad. International leaders have spoken to me of this.

Now also, Opposition arguments are based on certain assumptions and premises which are totally unfounded. I consider it essential to set the record straight. I wish to place the following facts before this hon. House. Firstly at no stage did the Governor of Andhra Pradesh consult me in his decision to dismiss the Rama Rao Ministry.

*** *** ***

I am going to repeat Sir. At no stage did the Governor of Andhra Pradesh consult me in his decision to dismiss the Rama Rao Ministry or to invite Shri Bhaskar Rao to form the Government. When we were trying to assess the actual situation, we learnt that the Governor had already initiated action to swear in the new Chief Minister, and that our

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* Participating in a discussion regarding political developments in Andhra Pradesh, *R.S. Deb.*, 21 August, 1984, cc. 233–38.

party M.L.As. there had extended their support to him, that is to the new C.M. The conclusion which the Governor had arrived at that Shri N.T. Rama Rao had lost the majority in the Legislative Assembly was based entirely on his own judgment and was not in any way influenced by me, my Government or my party at the Centre. (*Interruptions*) If Shri Advani thinks that every single decision is taken here, he is much mistaken and if he is mistaken about one thing, he can obviously be mistaken in many other matters. Even our decisions here in Delhi, unless it is a very important matter which has to come before the concerned committee, or may come to me personally, I may say that 90 per cent of decisions are taken by those concerned whether in the Party or in the Government. We do not function like the Marxists or the BJP.... (*Interruptions*).

*** *** ***

Sir, now, that the Governor has taken a decision, the question of majority or otherwise of the new Government has to be decided only on the floor of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly.... (*Interruptions*).

*** *** ***

Sir, I should have been impressed by Shri Advani's views on the importance of the Legislative Assembly meeting but for the fact that he very conveniently forgot to refer to the dismissal of Shri Devaraj Urs's Government by the then Janata Party Government.

*** *** ***

The judgment did not figure in the decision.* At that moment there was no question of the judgment. I have seen (*Interruption*). It is because somebody had raised this question. I am not justifying it; as I said I am not even replying to the points made but because a member has specifically mention this fact, I thought that I should refresh his memory. That is all I am trying to do....

*** *** ***

No, that is not what I am saying.** I am refeshing his memory. (*Interruptions*) I am not here to answer questions. I should also like the House to know that I am told that since 1967 during my tenure there has not been a single day when there has not been an Opposition Government somewhere in the country.... (*Interruptions*).

*** *** ***

Sir, I am sorry, I have to repeat this because I do not want the records to be wrong. Now that the Governor has taken the decision that the question of majority or otherwise of the new Government has to be decided only on the floor of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, I understand that the Chief Minister has already announced his

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* Shri M.S. Gurupadaswamy intervened to say that Shri Devaraj Urs's Government was dismissed because there was an inquiry of corruption against him.

** Responding to a Member's remark, "Two wrongs do not make one right".

decision to advise the Governor to advance the date of the convening of the Legislative Assembly. (*Interruptions*). I emphatically refute the charge..... (*Interruptions*). Your shouting is not going to cow me down. You do it every day and you do it today till you are blue in the face.... (*Interruptions*)

*** *** ***

I emphatically refute the charge that we are toppling governments..... (*Interruptions*)

*** *** ***

Anywhere that governments have fallen, it is because of their own internal dissension which have caused their parties to break up.

*** *** ***

We have nothing to do with that.* Did we have anything to do with the breakup of the Janata party?

*** *** ***

It is the Opposition governments who themselves spread the stories of toppling. You will remember that before the last elections in West Bengal, we heard a great deal that we were going to topple the CPI(M) government, that we were going to have the President's Rule. But none of that happened. We have never at any time, wanted to topple a government.

*** *** ***

I am painted to note that leaders of the Opposition parties now, as before, are trying to put the blame for everything on me, on the Congress Party and on the Central Government. Now that I have stated the facts before the House, I can only hope that the Opposition leaders will desist from misguiding the public and provoking a needless controversy on this issue.

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**Sir, It is not my intention to reply to Prof. Madhu Dandavate's remarks. The Minister of Home Affairs will do so and, if need be, I may intervene later except that the same subject is probably coming up tomorrow again.

*** *** ***

That is not true.*** I speak whenever there is reason for me to speak. It is true that I do not speak in season and out of season or when there is no reason to do so.

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* Replying to Shri Parvathaneni Upendra's comment, "You are expert in breaking parties".

** Participating in the debate on a Motion regarding disapproval of the act of Governor of Andhra Pradesh in dismissing Shri N.T. Rama Rao's Government without ascertaining majority on the Floor of the A.P. Assembly, *L.S. Deb.*; 21 August, 1984, cc. 368-74.

*** Responding to Prof. Madhu Dandavate's remark "We rarely hear your voice".

But, at this moment, I thought I should available myself of this earliest opportunity in this debate to state some facts regarding developments in Andhra Pradesh. I am not going into the details of them. I am just picking up one or two facts.

I might add that while I admire Prof. Madhu Dandvate's enthusiasm and his insistence in his concluding remark about our quitting, he has said it so many times that it has become rather stale. (*Interruptions*)

Much heat has been generated by hon. Members of the Opposition. You have seen it here and we have been hearing about it in the past few days. I am not unused to the sort of campaign or character assassination which they have launched outside. (*Interruptions*)

In earlier years also every subject, every possible gimmick has been tried by different parties at different times to vilify and to discredit me. It is no use making a noise. It is a fact known by the people of India as well as people outside India. (*Interruptions*)

*** *** ***

Thank you. Professor I am not, referring to you.* I said, different political parties at different times. I have not mentioned your name. Nor do I intend to do so. The House knows as well as the Indian people that I was not spared even when I was out of office. Now also, Opposition's arguments are based on certain assumptions and on premises which are totally unfounded. (*Interruptions*)

I consider it essential to set the records straight. So I want to place the following facts before the House. (*Interruptions*)

At no stage did the Governor of Andhra Pradesh consult me in his decision....

*** *** ***

If this is not vilification, I should like to know what it is, Prof. Madhu Dandavate. Perhaps, you give your definition of it.

*** *** ***

How do you know what rules who flouted and who did not ? (*Interruptions*)

If they keep making so much noise, I am going to repeat that sentence because it is important. It is equally important for the maintenance of democracy about which the hon. Members talk so much. I repeat, at no stage did the Governor of Andhra Pradesh consult me in his decision to dismiss the Rama Rao Ministry or to invite Shri Bhaskara Rao to form the Government. (*Interruptions*)

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* Prof. Madhu Dandavate said that he had never even referred to Smt. Indira Gandhi's character and would not refer to it in future also.

I am not yielding.

In fact, I got the news .... (*Interruptions*)

You do not believe the progress of India, you do not believe anything that is being done in India.... (*Interruptions*)

In fact, we first got the news through a news agency....

*** *** ***

While we were trying to ascertain the actual situation, we learnt that the Governor had already initiated action to swear in the new Chief Minister and also that our local Party MLAs had extended their support to him.

The conclusion which the Governor had arrived at that Shri N.T. Rama Rao had lost the majority in the Legislative Assembly was based entirely on his judgment ...and was not in any way (*Interruptions*) I am not going into those details. Later on those details will be given by my colleague. I have said that if necessary I can intervene again.

The conclusion of the Governor was entirely based on his judgment and was not in any way influenced by me, by government in the Centre or by my Party at the Centre. (*Interruptions*) Yes, I have just said so. (*Interruptions*)

*** *** ***

It is clear that the hon. Members do not even listen to what is being said. I have just said that my local party extended its support to the new Chief Minister. This is what you are also shouting about.

*** *** ***

Without consulting me....* (*Interruptions*)

Now that the Governor had taken a decision, the question of majority or otherwise of the new Government has to be decided only on the floor of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly.... (*Interruptions*)

I understand that the Chief Minister has already announced his decision to advise the Governor to advance the date of the convening of the Legislative Assembly. It has come in the paper. (*Interruptions*)

I emphatically refute the charge that we are toppling governments. (*Interruptions*)

Anywhere that a Government has fallen, it is because of its own internal dissensions which have caused its party to break up.

In Ahdhra Pradesh also we know what had happened before. I have come to know that the Leaders of the Opposition are trying now, as before, to put the blame of every thing on me and Congress (I) Party Members. (*Interruptions*) Now that I have put the facts before the House, I can only hope that the Opposition Leaders will desist from misguiding the public, provoking the public....

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* Responding to Shri K.P. Unnikrishnan's question, "That is also without consulting you ?"

9

INDIA AND THE WORLD

Visit of the Vice-President of the United States*

Madam Deputy Chairman, Vice-President Humphrey of the United States, accompanied by Mr. Averell Harriman and other officials, arrived in New Delhi on the 16th evening and left on the 17th night.

During the stay, Vice-President Humphrey called on the President and the Vice-President. He had discussions on economic problems with the Finance Minister, the Minister of Food and Agriculture, and the Minister of Planning, on international affairs with the Foreign Ministers and on the situation along our borders with the Defence Minister. Finally, he had talks with me which rounded up the discussions he had with my colleagues.

On the food front, he was anxious to get, for President Johnson's information, an assessment of what further assistance we would need from the United States, as well as the kind of help we had been able to mobilise from other countries. He made enquiries regarding our efforts to step up our own agricultural production and expressed satisfaction, both in his talks with me and later in his Press Conference, with the picture that we had given him of our plans to allocate more resources to agriculture and the evidence that he himself had got of the effectiveness with which our plans were being implemented during his visit to the Punjab.

He further informed me that in order to help our industries to utilize their capacities more fully, the U.S. Government would extend a loan of $100 million which would be available for the import of commodities which are in short supply. He indicated that during my visit to Washington, President Johnson would discuss with me the question of further economic assistance and support for our Fourth Five-Year Plan. In this context, he pointed out and I fully agreed with him, that a country which receives aid from outside should do everything possible to mobilise its own resources to accelerate its rate of growth.

We had a full and frank exchange of views on the Vietnam situation. Vice-President Humphrey gave a resume of the U.S. position on Vietnam and of the outcome of the meeting of President Johnson with the leaders of the South Vietnam Government held in Hawaii recently. He affirmed the U.S. Government's wish to avoid a widening of the conflict and emphasised that they were anxious to see an early restoration of peace which would enable the people of Vietnam to decide their own future through normal democratic processes. He mentioned the keen desire of President Johnson and of the South Vietnam

* Making a Statement regarding the visit to India of the US Vice-President, *R.S. Deb.*, 22 February, 1966, cc. 879-884.

Government to accelerate social and economic development. He appreciated that India's attitude regarding Vietnam was based on India's position as a non-aligned country and as Chairman of the International Commission for Control and supervision. He expressed the hope that we would do everything possible to facilitate a peaceful solution of the problem. We expressed our concern at the danger of the escalation of the conflict and our anxiety that a peaceful solution should be found for which the framework of the Geneva Agreement formed the best basis.

*** *** ***

Madam Deputy Chairman, I am obliged to the hon. Member for drawing my attention to the various newspaper reports.* It is not customary to give the details of such talks but as I have mentioned in my statement, Vice-President Humphrey did state the American point of view and we stated the Indian Government's point of view. There is no question of our giving in on any point. Their attitude is clear and our attitude has been reiterated many times. It is equally clear.

* Shri Bhupesh Gupta drew the attention of the Prime Minister to the press reports which said that the US Vice-President, Mr. Humphrey during his talks with the Indian Prime Minister had complained about the denunciation in the Indian Press of the US Vietnam policy and was reassured about it. There was an effort by the US to attach strings to the aid to be given to India. Shri Bhupesh Gupta wanted to know what exactly transpired in that regard.

Indo-US Relations*

Madam Deputy Chairman, as the House is aware, I paid an official visit to the United States from 28th March to 1st April in response to an invitation from President Johnson. On the way I broke journey at Paris, where I met President De Gaulle and Prime Minister Pompidou. On the return journey I met Prime Minister Wilson in the course of a brief stop-over in London. I also made a halt at Moscow, where I had discussions with Chairman Kosygin.

In Paris I was received with much warmth and cordiality. President De Gaulle showed deep interest in our economic problems and assured me of the earnest desire of the French Government and people to help us in dealing with them. In particular, the French Government is ready to help develop further cultural, scientific and technical co-operation between out two countries. A team of French technical experts is visiting India soon in pursuance of this objective. My talks with the French President revealed a full understanding of our position on various international issues and a substantial area of agreement between France and India on many issues. I feel sure that my meeting with President De Gaulle will further strengthen the close and friendly relations between our two countries. Our President has already invited President De Gaulle. The House will recall that some time back (towards the end of last year) Shrimati Pandit personally conveyed the invitation from the President when she visited France an our special envoy. I hope President De Gaulle will find it convenient to visit our country. He will be a very welcome and honoured guest.

Before coming to the main points of discussion with President Johnson and the impressions of my visit to the United States; I should like to take this opportunity to tell the House of the great warmth and graciousness of the hospitality and courtesy shown to me by President Johnson and the American people and to express my sincere thanks to them for it. I had full and frank discussions with President Johnson and his colleagues, and the broad substance of our discussions is set out in the joint communique issued at the end of the visit. A copy of the communique is placed on the Table of the House. I should perhaps mention briefly the general spirit in which our talks took place. In the fast changing world of today, such meetings are necessary even between friends who share many values in common. Our object was primarily to establish a close rapport and understanding, and not to exchange advice or favours. I believe that in this we succeeded in full measure—an outcome which owes much to the complete candour and mutual confidence with which we approached our task. The conversations ranged over a wide field.

* Statement by the Prime Minister regarding her visit abroad, *R.S. Deb.*, 7 April, 1966, cc. 5781-96.

President Johnson expressed understanding and appreciation of our own massive efforts to raise the living standards of our people. He assured me of the deep interest of his Government in continuing to assist us in our efforts to promote such development, by playing its full part in the Consortium, which has existed for some years, to mobilise external support for our plans under the auspices of the World Bank.

On our emergency needs for food, President Johnson sent an urgent message to the U.S. Congress immediately after our discussions, seeking Congressional approval for generous additional supplies of foodgrains, cotton and other agricultural commodities. The message set our economic progress and current problems in perspective. I am sure the House would like to join me in expressing our appreciation of its speedy passage through the U.S. Congress. During our talks on India's food problem, President Johnson likewise displayed a sympathetic understanding and appreciation of our efforts to help ourselves, of the promise of our plans for increasing agricultural production and of our programmes for population control.

The President also announced the establishment of an Indo-U.S. Foundation to help develop new techniques in farm and factory, to advance science and to extend research facilities. Such a proposal had in fact been under consideration for quite some time and was approved by Government about a year ago. The Foundation will be administered in a manner consistent with the Government of India's educational plans and programmes and with a view to further the national interest and the health of the economy.

As the House is aware, we view external assistance only as a means of supplementing our own efforts and as an aid towards achieving self-reliance in the shortest possible time. In the course of our talks President Johnson repeatedly stated that the United States views its assistance to us in the same spirit of promoting self-help and early self-reliance on our part without interfering with our policies or plans.

There was reference to India's relations with Pakistan during the talks. I reiterated India's desire to promote the friendliest of relations with Pakistan in keeping with the Tashkent spirit, despite the difficulties created. We agreed that the peaceful processes set in motion by the Tashkent Declaration should be continued. President Johnson expressed his strong support for the Tashkent Declaration and his desire that there should be friendship between India and Pakistan. Reference was also made to the threat posed to India's security by China's aggressive designs and postures. Apart from re-affirming our determination to defend our freedom and territorial integrity against any threat, from whatever quarter it may come, I emphasised the fact that the long-range challenge of China is as much political or economic as millitary. I also explained that India's gigantic effort to attain the goal of democratic socialism and of achievements in the field of development, in conditions of stability, was itself a notable contribution to peace.

The situation in Vietnam was briefly discussed. I reiterated India's continuing desire to see a just and peaceful solution of this problem.

I have extended an invitation to President and Mrs. Johnson to visit India, and the President has expressed the hope that it would be possible for him to visit our country again.

In New York I had a useful meetings with Secretary-General U Thant at the United Nations and took this opportunity to address the Afro-Asian group.

Besides the discussions which I had with President Johnson and his colleagues, I had occasion during my stay in the United States to meet and share my thoughts with a large number of distinguished American citizens in the course of various public engagements. I reiterated our stand on Kashmir and its wider implications. These contacts have, I think, helped promote a better understanding of our views by the American people.

On my way back from the United States I had a meeting with Prime Minister Wilson in London. Our talks covered many subjects and were held in a friendly atmosphere. They have resulted in a better understanding of India's position. Mr. Wilson expressed the British Government's readiness to join other countries in giving urgent consideration to immediate steps for providing further economic assistance to India as soon as possible. I have invited Mr. Wilson to visit India, and he has accepted the invitation.

In Moscow I had valuable exchange of views with Chairman Kosygin, in the course of which we reviewed the international scene and, in particular, the developments following the signing of the Tashkent Declaration. As the House is aware, Indo-Soviet co-operation in the economic and other fields has grown steadily during the past many years. A number of projects are currently under execution with Soviet assistance, and the Bokaro steel plant has been added to the list very recently. The Soviet Union continues to take a friendly and sympathetic interest in our Fourth Plan, and during our talks in Moscow we agreed that the preliminary discussions, which we have already had in this regard, will be expeditiously pursued.

Chairman and Mrs. Kosygin have agreed to visit India later this year. This will give us yet another opportunity to strengthen the bonds of friendship and goodwill between our two countries.

I was reluctant to be away from India even for a brief period when Parliament is in session and at a time when we have many pressing problems to tackle at home. But as the House will appreciate, despite the urgency of our tasks and the underlying friendship of other nations towards us, it is necessary to develop contacts at the personal level from time to time with the leaders of countries with which we have established strong ties of cooperation and understanding. I have every hope that my discussion during this visit abroad will advance the cause of friendship and cooperation not only between our respective countries but also in the wider comity of nations.

Madam Deputy Chairman, throughout my ten-day visit, I found an abundance of friendship and goodwill for India and a growing understanding of the significance of India's foreign policy and of its developmental efforts. We can derive satisfaction and strength from these manifestations of friendship. But we must never forget that there is no substitute

for hard and determined effort and sacrifice on the part of the Indian people. The nations of the world are watching the Indian experiment and they will respect us and be willing to assist us only in the measure of our own effort and sense of dedication. This is the task to which we must now, as before, address ourselves, with faith and confidence in the capacity of our people to shape the destiny of India.*

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Madam, it is not a fact that I did not go prepared**. We did have business talks...

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There are so many questions. Madam the first is about the Indo-American Foundation. Perhaps hon. Members are aware that the money for this is already here. It is PL 480 money which is in India some of which up till now used to be reloaned to the Government of India for Plan investment. Some very small proportion, five per cent, is kept for the so-called Cooley Fund from which private investment with American collaboration is supported and the balance of 15 per cent has been reserved for U.S. Government use in India. Uptill now this was entirely in the discretion of the Americans. This Foundation brings, if I may put it that way, a little discipline into it and, as I have said, the programmes which will be financed through this Foundation will be within the framework of our Plan and our own priorities. All investments will be made in Government of India bonds. Now I think this is a better way of using the money than has been the case uptill now.

About Vietnam, naturally one cannot agree on every point with everybody and different nations do have different points of view. They appreciate India's stand in this respect.

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...As far as arms aid to Pakistan is concerned, naturally this was mentioned. What they will do and how they will look into this matter is their own concern. ***We can only put forward our own point of view with regard to these matters.

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...Now about the question of World Bank. Here firstly nothing has been postponed. The food aid to India message has already passed through the Congress. As far as economic aid is concerned, the consortium has already held a meeting and other meeting will be held soon. Naturally this has to be now discussed in the perspective of our Fourth Plan and those details can only be gone into by experts from both sides, not only from my side but even from the American side. It is not for President Johnson to discuss the points but for his experts. And routing the aid through the World Bank enables the aid-giving countries

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* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi in Lok Sabha also. *(L.S. Deb.,* 7 April 1966, cc. 10010-15).

** Replying to Shri Dahyabhai V. Patel who said that the Prime Minister did not go prepared to talk business with the President of the United States.

*** Answering the points raised by Shri Bhupesh Gupta.

to muster the support of their people and their legislatures for it and thus they find it easier to go through with their different proposals if the people know that these proposals are endorsed by the World Bank. And I do not think it harms our own interests in any way.

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Naturally, Madam, people were rather disturbed at the speeches, rather provocative speeches, which have been delivered in Pakistan recently on this question but they did all feel that India should show patience and that we on our part should try not to act in the same way but to see if it is possible to implement the Declaration.*

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Madam, what I said was that India would be glad to find a peaceful solution to Vietnam.** I did not say that India had such a solution. I think it is possible to get around a table and discuss these matters. I think if we or anybody could be instrumental in arranging such a meeting, on the basis of the Geneva Agreement, it could lead to peace in Vietnam.

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As regards my stop-over in Cairo, I would centainly have done so with great pleasure. Only it was not on the way. When the route was planned, I was going by Air-India and we had decided to return *via* Moscow. You cannot do both Cairo and Moscow on the same trip. I do not think, Madam, that I can reply to the third question, which has been asked here.

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* Smt. Shakuntala Paranjpye asked whether the Prime Minister tried to find out what Chairman Kosygin thought about Pakistan's attitude towards the Tashkent Agreement.

** Replying to Shri A.P. Chatterjee who wanted to know (i) whether the Prime Minister had told President Johnson of America and Premier Wilson of England that unless the American forces were withdrawn from Vietnam, there would not be any peaceful solution to Vietnam; (ii) Why did she not stop over in Cario; and (iii) whether the Prime Minister had got an assurance from President Johnson that the American Central Intelligence Agency would not utilize the PL-480 funds in India.

India's Foreign Relations*

Madam Deputy Chairman, the House is aware that I visited the Soviet Union from July 12th to 16th in response to an invitation extended to me by Chairman Kosygin soon after I assumed office, and renewed twice thereafter, *En route* to Moscow, I took the opportunity to meet President Nasser in Cairo and President Tito in Brioni, in response to their earlier invitations.

Hon. Members are aware of the very close and friendly relations we have with the three countries. With the U.A.R. and Yugoslavia, we are bound closely by common dedication to the policy of peace and non-alignment and by close co-operation in many fields and on many occasions in international conferences. Personal contacts between the Heads of these Governments and our own have been frequent and fruitful.

It was a great pleasure for me to renew personal contacts with President Nasser and President Tito. With both leaders, I had frank and friendly exchange of views on the international situation, particularly as it affects the policies of non-aligned countries. Both President Nasser and President Tito shared our desire to strengthen the policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence, which plays such a vital role in the maintenance of peace and friendly relations among States. They also shared our concern at the various pressures to which the policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence is being subjected, both in the political and economic spheres. We discussed our bilateral relations which happily have been developing satisfactorily with both the U.A.R. and Yugoslavia, and agreed that they should be further strengthened in various fields, including economic, cultural and scientific, to our mutual advantage.

I informed President Nasser and President Tito of our sincere desire for friendly and good neighbourly relations with Pakistan in the spirit of the Tashkent Declaration. I also informed them of China's hostile and provocative attitude towards us and of our friendly and co-operative relations with our other neighbours, such as Afghanistan, Burma. Ceylon, Nepal, Malaysia and Singapore.

President Nasser and President Tito agreed that we should co-operate with one another and with other non-aligned countries in making non-alignment a dynamic force for the lowering of tensions and for promoting peaceful co-existence in the present-day strife-torn world. They said that they were looking forward to the tripartite meeting which is to be held in October this year in India where these matters could be discussed further.

* Statement on her visit abroad, *R.S. Deb.*, 25 July, 1966, cc 172–80.

It was agreed to institute regular consultations between India and the U.A.R. and India and Yugoslavia on matters of common interest. We agreed that personal contacts between us and between our Ministers, officials and others are invaluable and should be as frequent as possible.

In the course of my State visit to the Soviet Union. I had discussions with Chairman Kosygin and Mr. Brezhnev, while the Minister of External Affairs, Sardar Swaran Singh, met the U.S.S.R. Foreign Minister, Mr. Gromyko and the members of the delegation and discussions with officials of the Soviet Government. My talks with Chairman Kosygin and other Soviet leaders took place in an atmosphere of frankness, friendship and complete understanding. The discussions covered a wide range of subjects of mutual interest to both our countries.

We discussed, in particular the post-Tashkent developments in relation to India and Pakistan. I acquainted him with certain developments on the other side of the border which were causing us concern. I apprised Chairman Kosygin and his colleagues of the steps which India had already taken in this direction, including some of the unilateral steps, such as the removal of the trade embargo and the release of confiscated cargo, and of our desire to have talks with Pakistan at any level, without any pre-conditions, in the spirit of the Tashkent Declaration, so as to build friendly and good neighbourly relations with that country and resolve peacefully all our disputes. Chairman Kosygin expressed positive appreciation of our position. The Joint Communiqué briefly reflects our discussions on this subject.

I was glad to find that there is no change in the basic position of the Soviet Union on important questions of special interest to us. I was assured that their stand on Kashmir remains unchanged. While the Soviet leaders expressed their desire to improve their relations with Pakistan, they assured us that this would not be done at the expense of their friendship with India. They also assured us that they had not supplied any arms or armaments to Pakistan, nor had any agreements with Pakistan been made in this regard.

On international questions, our discussions confirmed the identity of views on a broad range of international questions, such as peace and security, renunciation of the threat or use of force, resolution of international disputes, including border disputes, solely by peaceful means, the acceptance of peaceful co-existence as an imperative for the maintenance of international harmony, and the freedom of dependent peoples.

We also discussed the question of strengthening world peace and reducing international tensions. We agreed that it would help if all military alliances were simultaneously dissolved. We consider this a step forward and hope that sooner or later all countries will realise that military alliances hinder rather than foster mutual trust and confidence.

Madam Deputy Chairman, before my departure I had, in the course of my broadcast to the nation on the evening of July 7, put forward certain ideas as a possible basis for a peaceful solution of the Vietnam problem. The basis of my approach is that there can be no military solution in Vietnam. There is no alternative to seeking a peaceful solution in order to avoid a disastrous war, with the danger of massive escalation. A peaceful solution

can be reached only at a conference table. Hence the necessity for the co-chairmen to convene a Geneva-type conference to which we attach the greatest importance. It would be unrealistic to expect a conference until the bombing of North Vietnam is stopped. India has always been against such bombing. Once a Geneva-type conference is called, we anticipate that it might take considerable time to achieve final results. Therefore, it was suggested that, during this interim period, the International Control Commission, strengthened if necessary, should assure the observance of any standstill arrangements which might be agreed upon. The objective of the conference should be to find a solution within the framework of the Geneva Agreements of 1954. The Vietnamese people should be able to decide their future in accordance with their own wishes without pressure or interference from any quarter.

These ideas are not new; we have expressed them from time to time. I was, and continue to be, deeply concerned by the human suffering and the danger of escalation of this conflict into a wider war, with disastrous consequences not only for Asia but for the world. Already the escalation has led to a revival of cold war postures and a sharpening of confrontation. This is what prompted my suggestions. I felt that at this juncture it was incumbent on us, as an Asian country deeply interested in peace, to draw the Vietnam problem away from the battlefield to the conference table.

This question naturally figured in our talks in Cairo and Brioni. There was closeness of views between our Government and the Governments of the U.A.R. and Yugoslavia.

In Moscow also we exchanged views on Vietnam. The joint communiqué refers to our basic points of agreement.

So far as our own suggestions are concerned, we stand by them. We are convinced that there is no alternative to a peaceful solution reached at a conference table. Our proposals contain a reasonable basis for starting the process of negotiations. We are pursuing our efforts.

In our talks in Moscow, we touched upon Indo-Soviet economic co-operation. The Soviet leaders showed their usual sympathy and understanding for our economic problems and for the efforts made by us for economic development. My colleagues, the Planning Minister, the Food and Agriculture Minister and the Commerce Minister who had preceded me, had finalised agreements on various matters. Since Chairman Kosygin was away in Bucharest during their visits and returned to Moscow only a couple of days before my own arrival, confirmation of these agreements was conveyed to me. The Soviet Government announced a total credit of 970 million roubles, that is, about Rs. 830 crore, in state and commercial credits during our Fourth Five Year Plan. This aid is mainly for more industries in the public sector. I should like to take this opportunity of expressing our sincere gratitude to the government and people of the Soviet Union for their response to our requirements of financial credit and technical assistance in various projects during our Fourth Five-Year Plan.

I emphasised that India was determined to achieve a self-generating economy in the next decade and to build a socialist order in keeping with the needs and aspirations of our people. Both sides regard Indo-Soviet friendship as aimed against none, as a friendship

that does not prevent either the Soviet Union or India from making friends with other countries.

In all three countries we were received with great cordiality and with the warmth and friendship which characterise our relations. I should like once again to express my sincere thanks to the government and people of the U.A.R., Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. I am confident that my visit and the personal contacts between us and the leaders of the three countries have contributed to increased understanding and have strengthened the ever growing bonds of friendship between our countries and peoples....

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Madam Deputy Chairman, with your permission I place on the Table of the House the following documents:

(1) the joint Indo-Soviet communique of July 16, 1966.
(2) the joint Press statement issued in Cairo on July 10, 1966.
(3) the joint Press statement issued in Brioni on July 12, 1966.

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As mentioned in my statement, Madam, there was closeness of views–but not full identity of views in these matters for a number of reasons–on Vietnam with all the three countries.* They were not willing for various reasons which of course we had discussed–but these are confidential conversations and talks and one cannot mention them publicly–but one thing was clear that they all agreed with our own view that unless bombing stops first no further steps can be taken or even envisaged.

With regard to our borders we naturally put before all these countries the situation as we see it and according to the information we have both with regard to Pakistan and with regard to China. We can only repeat what the Soviet leaders told us. They told us that there was no change in their attitude towards Kashmir; at the same time they are anxious to build friendship with Pakistan as they feel that that will strengthen them in restraining Pakistan as well as be of help to us. With regard to arms also they assured us, as I have said in my statement, that they have not supplied any arms nor made any such agreement.

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Tashkent Agreement is merely a declaration.** We cannot issue such warning to other countries. But we have certainly told them that if a thing like this happens, the people of India will not take it in good taste and it will have a wider ramifications also. This much we did tell them.†

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* Shri Mulka Govinda Reddy wanted to know whether U.A.R. President Nasser and Yugoslav President Tito shared India's view on the Vietnam problem. Whether the Prime Minister of USSR appreciated the proposals of the Prime Minister of India on Vietnam and whether the Prime Minister of India brought to the notice of the Prime Minister of USSR that Pakistan was violating the Tashkent agreement.

** Replying to the points raised by Shri V.M. Chaurasia about the violation of the Tashkent Agreement by Pakistan and about the reported proposals for arms aid to Pakistan by Russia.

† Translated from Hindi.

India's Foreign Policy*

Every time there is a debate on foreign policy, one has to say something which one has said repeatedly. I should have liked to avoid saying them this time, but some hon. Members of the Opposition have again talked on the same points and, therefore, it becomes necessary to give the correct perspective once again.

Foreign policy is conditioned by the objectives of any country's internal policy, and internal policy in turn is a manifestation of the people's aspirations and political philosophy. Our foreign policy has to be governed by what we ourselves have gone through. We have been subjected to foreign domination and we, at least my generation, cannot forget the arrogance or the humiliation of the domination. Therefore, it is natural for us to speak out when we see similar things happening to other people. Even when we were fighting for our own independence, we spoke out for other independence movements. We spoke out for the oppressed of all other lands. I think that in turn gave us strength and helped our movement. Today also...we cannot isolate our policy in this, we cannot isolate our lives from what is happening elsewhere. It is said many times : why are we bothered with what is happening outside when there are so many problems within India? But at no time in history was any country fully isolated. Certainly, in this century and in this part of the century, there cannot be isolation, when we are also closely linked with what is happening in other countries. It may be right for some small countries, who are not so closely linked with various streams. Who have not been through a freedom struggle, who have not got our racial memories to keep aloof; but it is not possible for India, it is certainly not possible for this Government to keep aloof from what is happening in the rest of the world. Whenever we have not spoken out loudly, it is the members of the opposition who have accused us then of sitting on the fence and of not speaking as loudly as we might have.

Much has been said about non-alignment. I have, here in this House and outside this House, repeated time and again that non-alignment has at no stage meant neutrality. There are only two ways : either you are non-aligned or you are aligned. I would like to ask my hon. friends of the Opposition this; when they criticise non-alignment, does it mean that they wish us to be aligned, and, if so, with whom, with which alliance, with which country? Of those who speak against non-alignment, we have a right to ask this question, we have a right to have an answer to it from them.

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* Replying to the debate on the Demands for Grants, Ministry of External Affairs, 1967-68, *L.S. Deb.*, 17 July, 1967, cc. 12414–25.

When there were two main blocs, the object of non-alignment was to achieve a *detente*. My hon. friend opposite, Mr. Masani, accused us yesterday of preventing such a *detente* between the two super powers. I would like to tell him that far from preventing, if today there is a blurring of these blocs, if there is a tendency for them to talk more and to be a little closer together, it is largely because of the policy of non-alignment followed not only by India but by an increasing number of countries all over the world. This is not merely my opinion; it is the opinion of many people in the world, including some of the people whom Mr. Masani admires. (*Interruptions*). He knows best; I need not say.

Today it is not just a question of people coming together. We still believe in the necessity of peace, and when I said earlier that we could not remain isolated from what was happening, this is one of the main reasons; whenever there is a war, it affects us; it affects our economy; it affects not only the Government's policy but it indirectly affects the lives of all the people of this country by pushing up prices, by making the availability of certain things difficult and so on, so that we have a stake in peace. It is not that we are just talking about a high ideal, but it is something which is very essential to our survival, to our existence and to our development. So, we are interested in these countries coming together. But we have to see on what issues they are coming together; how that is going to affect us, how it is going to affect our national interests.

We are idealistic in our thinking certainly. But, I do not think that our idealism is in any way divorced from the interests of our people.

We have gone through, as I was saying just now, in fact, not only India, but most of the countries in Africa and Asia, have gone through long periods of foreign domination. We have not yet recovered from that. It is not fair to compare what is happening here, in a vast country of such diversities and such different levels of development with what some small country has achieved and with an enormous amount of foreign aid. We, the people of Asia and Africa, have to guard our common interests very zealously. We must oppose any move to damage our sovereignty, whether these moves are by way of direct external pressure or whether they take a more subtle disguised form. Sometimes, emotional responses are deliberately engineered to damage the balance of our policies or to push us into a frame of action which is not really in our interest.

Hon. Members must consider, as I said earlier, which pact we should join? Would we have greater freedom if we belong to any one side or would it limit our freedom of action and freedom of judgment? Secondly, would the big powers give us anything, we want merely if we sign a piece of paper? I think it would be extremely naive to think so.

Joining a pact would impose limitations on our policies, both external and internal, because our action would be conditioned by the obligations of these pacts or treaties. Today, what is the state of alliances? I think hon. Members know that there is considerable re-thinking about both the CENTO and the SEATO. The blocs are dissolving, and several centres of power are crystallising. There are also very subtle nuances in the relationship of the super-powers and their partners. There are significant contradictions and there are also certain parallelisms.

Whatever attitude we take is governed by the ultimate effect of it. Today, some one nation may have won a war. But what will be the result of this long afterwards? We know that the war has bred tremendous bitterness, and bitterness cannot be wiped out by words. If we take sides or we assure our support to somebody, it is not just for taking up an attitude or shouting out aloud, or, as my hon. friend, Shri Manoharan has said, because we like the sound of our voices, but it is because we feel that in that particular situation, speaking out will help to draw attention to something... which could help the situation or lessen the bitterness. It is up to the hon. Members of the Opposition to feel that in all these twenty years, India's voice has not counted. They are free to say so. But it does not alter the historical facts. It does not alter the facts that on many occasions it is India's voice and it is India's quiet persistent efforts at the UN and at other international...forums...which have produced good results in the end. For instance, when the Korean fighting was on, India produced a resolution. We were blamed by both sides right and left that it was very wrong thing to do and we were letting down everybody and so on. And yet that resolution formed the basis of the settlement which later came about..

So, it is not possible, just sitting at this distance, to judge exactly what tremendous work goes on behind the scenes at the UN or how we are able to influence or change the stream of events there. It does not mean that we always succeed. Nobody has always succeeded. I would like hon. Members to tell me whether there is a single big power today in the world which can say that its foreign policy has always succeeded. There is not, and it cannot be possible. But I think that by and large we have succeeded. Of course, we may make mistakes; we are not infallible, but by and large our efforts have made some little dent and we have been able to create the right atmosphere. If you were to go to the UNO, you will know, and I hope that my colleague, the Foreign Minister, will tell you of his own recent experience, how the people are anxious to know what India is thinking. I know about it. I have not been to the UN, but I have functioned in the UNESCO for five years, and I saw how much weight people put on India's opinion. In fact, it has even happened once that the delegate of a country phoned to his Government to find out what stand he should take on a particular issue, and the reply, to his surprise, was 'Please find out what India is going to do'. It was not a communist country; it was not even an Asian country.

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Both are connected*. This is what I have been trying to explain. Both are very closely connected. You cannot separate the two. We want to influence world events in such a way as will be in our national interest, as will help us in the long run and in the short run too.

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I do not want to go into the West Asian crisis, because I have talked about it on an earlier occasion, and I do not want to go into the details of any particular issue here. But I do think that the manner in which some Members make an equation rather facetiously, if

* Replying to Shri Bal Raj Madhok who said : "Is the object of our foreign policy to see whether we influence the world or not or to defend our own country's interest ? What is the main object of our foreign policy ?"

I may say so, about little Israel threatened by the aggressive Arabs reminds me in a way of how people in other countries talk similarly of tiny Pakistan being threatened by a huge India. The history of these problems, the physchology of peoples, the tragic use of small but dangerous military establishments against larger independent neighbours must be kept in view when deciding our attitudes.

As I said, our interest is very much concerned with what is happening in these other areas, and we look at them not only from the point of view of what is happening today but also from the point of view of how it affects the future of our country.

My hon. friend Shri M.R. Masani tried to compare our capture of the Haji Pir and other points with the Israeli aggression, but he forgets that Haji Pir is our territory at this moment...

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It is not at all a dangerous ground*. We have temporarily come back from there because we made a treaty.

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It is not only Haji Pir which is today under Pakistani occupation, but a great deal more of Indian territory is there on that side...

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We have not separated Haji Pir from the rest of that land. We do not accept Pakistan's occupation of that land; Pakistani occupation on our land covers a great deal more than just those two or three points.

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The point is that all these events are not isolated and we have to assess their total impact on ourselves.

As far as our own borders are concerned, the Defence Minister has spoken here many a time. I have gone there recently not because of any immediate danger, but because I have been taking interest in our border areas and our security forces who are stationed there right from 1962, and have been visiting these areas every year since then. I must tell the House that it is always a pleasure to go there and see the fine spirit of our people, of our forces who are living in such conditions of extreme hardship. It is difficult to imagine what hardships they face unless one goes there oneself and sees for oneself.

I talked earlier about Shri Masani's point concerning *detente*. We are certainly interested in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, but we feel that by itself this does not solve any problem. That is why the 18-nation Commission was not called a Non-Proliferation

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* Replying to Shri Bal Raj Madhok who said, "She is treading on very dangerous ground".

Commission, but the Disarmament Commission. We believe in total disarmament and we think we should work towards it.

Shri Masani also dwelt at great length on the nuclear shield and blamed us for not following it up. Actually we did take the initiative. Shri Masani knows that Shri L.K. Jha went to various places in that connection. Earlier... President Johnson had made a statement. However, that was a unilateral declaration and it did not really call for any application on our part. We welcome what President Johnson said, But what we would like to see, and what we feel is necessary must had also is a guarantee given by all the nuclear powers or at least as many of them as would find it possible to do so and belonging to the different camps, to the non-nuclear countries–that if nuclear weapons are used against any of them by a nuclear power, the others would rally to their support. This would act as a deterrent to any nuclear power.

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We must realise that in the final analysis the effectiveness of any such shield in the field of security would depend not on the spirit in which the protectionist power accepts such a shield, but on the national and vital interests of the giver.

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We should work towards certain objectives. Even if there is such a shield forth in coming for the non-nuclear powers, we should go a step further which would lead to the banning of the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries, in the same way as the use of poison gas has been, by treaty, declared unlawful. That is the only way in which it would help.

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That is the whole point about the non-proliferation treaty, that it seeks to stick to the *status quo*. It tries to have a freeze. The *status quo* cannot exist since China is a nuclear power and would not anyhow be a party to such a treaty.

I was very sorry to hear that Shri Bal Raj Madhok made certain remarks regarding a lobby in the foreign office. There is only one lobby in any department of the Government, and that is the Indian lobby. Perhaps Shri Madhok is thinking of lobbies elsewhere.

In this connection, the name of one of our officers was also brought in. As you know, there are definite rules against naming offices in Parliament in this manner because they are not here to protect themselves. Once before, an hon. Member of the Opposition had made an unfounded allegation against this officer and at that time, my distinguished predecessor, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, shoutly defended him. Such statements, specially when we bring in religion, other such factors only help to weaken the fabric of our society. The officer mentioned is an able and experienced officer who has acquitted himself well in very difficult circumstances. There has been absolutely no occasion to doubt his loyalty, and I must tell the House that I have confidence in his integrity.

I have spoken rather generally about certain matters because I felt that this whole question of foreign policy has to be put in a certain perspective. I would have liked to go in greater detail into certain matters. But I am sure that my colleague, the External Affairs Minister, will do so ably, specially as he has been in very close touch with the leaders of the delegations from other nations at the UN and knows what has been happening there. But I should like to repeat that when it is a question of our security, when it is a question of defending ourselves–of course, the Army is very important, it is the first defence but the unity of the people, giving an impression that we are all solidly behind that Army, is equally important. I do not often agree with Dr. Lohia, but I do agree with what he said with regard to equating poverty, the conditions in the country, with defence and foreign policy. It is a very relevant point and that is why government policy in this or in other matters is directed towards taking things in a particular direction which makes it stronger, step by step. We are today not perhaps as strong as we would wish ourselves to be, but we are making every effort at the moment to gain that strength, both amongst the people and also in regard to the defence forces. It is this united strength of the people, of the defence forces backed by a united and disciplined people that will carry us through. I say this about discipline because although hon. Members opposite would like us to be strong, sometimes they are not equally keen on discipline. I do not think you can have strength unaccompanied by discipline. So if we take these things together, I think that we will march forward and we shall achieve the objectives of our foreign policy.

India's International Relations*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move:

"That the present international situation and the policy of the Government of India in relation thereto be taken into consideration."

Sir, I welcome this debate and I share the concern of the hon. Members that it is to be such a short one. But the world situation is some what like the situation in our own country; it is a blend of both hope and despair. On the one hand there is an urge towards peace and economic progress through international co-operation and, on the other hand, there do exist centres of tension which cause conflicts and divisions within the world community. On the positive side there is an ever increasing awareness of the need for the inter-dependence of nations. Although each country would like to be as self-sufficient and as self-reliant as possible, nevertheless, the world cannot exist without a certain amount of inter-dependence between different countries. One of the factors which causes great concern to India and to all developing countries is the widening gap between the rich and the poor nations. And, in spite of much effort that is being made in many directions we have not been able to solve this problem, and the gap is a growing one. I feel that this is what sows the seeds of conflict and is an ever-present feature that disturbs peace.

We greatly welcome the good relationship which we have had with our neighbouring countries, with Burma, with Ceylon and with Nepal. With Burma, as hon. Members know, we have recently concluded a border agreement. With Ceylon, I have already mentioned to the hon. Members on a previous occasion of my own visit there, which was followed by the visit of the Governor-General, Ceylon, which gave us opportunities to exchange views. With Nepal also we have had several exchanges. Our Deputy Prime Minister has been to Nepal and, very recently, the King of Nepal passed through Delhi. We were both able to have talks with him and to take up various matters of mutual concern.

We have been trying to maintain good relations and develop our relations with other countries of South Asia and also with Japan, with Australia and with New Zealand. We have a modest programme of technical assistance and bilateral economic co-operation between India and other developing countries. But the urge of Asia towards economic progress and even co-operation cannot further itself while there is any area of conflict,

* While moving a Motion regarding the international situation, *L.S. Deb.*, 22 December, 1967, cc. 9300-07 & 9366-77.

and that is why from the very beginning it has been our effort to be interested in problems of peace and to try the ways of achieving peaceful settlement wherever there is conflict.

We have been vitally interested in the conflict in Vietnam, for instance, and I should like to repeat our hope that bombing should be stopped there, thus giving an opportunity to open up ways in which the conflict can come to the conference table from the battle field. We are deeply interested in peace in the neighbouring countries and, therefore, we have supported all peace initiatives which have been inspired by the same objective, and specially that made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. U Thant.

We continue to shoulder our responsibility of the chairmanship of the International Control Commission in the hope that this Commission may ultimately provide an instrument for international peace. I am sure the House would wish to join me in paying tribute to the personnel of the International Control Commission and our Consulate-General in Hanoi, who are conducting themselves with calm, courage and dignity in very difficult circumstances. I know that the Commission is not able to be very active but, nevertheless, all parties are desirous of its continuance, as I said earlier, in the hope that in the future it could play a more useful role.

I should like also to speak of our relationship with Cambodia and Laos. Both these countries are facing extremely difficult situations and in spite of the pressures and difficulties they are trying to maintain a neutral position, and we do support them in this. Recently, we welcomed the King of Laos and we had the opportunity of reaffirming the similarity of our aspirations and ideals. The other visit we have had was of the Chief Minister of Fiji, Mr. Ratu K.K.T. Mara. We have assured him of our interest in co-operation and in the peaceful and harmonious development of Fiji. Then, more recent still, we had the Prime Minister of Mauritius, Sir Shewsager Ramgoolam. His visit also provided us with an opportunity for renewing our old cultural and traditional ties with the people of Mauritius and of forging new links.

While dwelling on Asia. I should like to mention once again the growing understanding between our country and Australia and New Zealand. We belong to the same geographical region and our interests are interlinked in many ways. We are glad that there has been a realisation of this and we of course have always believed in this,–in Australia and New Zealand also. Today our thoughts go out specially to the people of Australia, for this is the day when they are mourning the tragic loss of their able and distinguished Prime Minister, Sir Harold Holt.

While I am speaking of the Commonwealth, may I here mention our relations with the other countries of the Commonwealth and, in particular, with the United Kingdom ? Recently, we had the visit to Delhi of Mr. Prentice, the Minister for Overseas Development and I mentioned to him, as I would like to say here, our appreciation of the terms under which the United Kingdom has given as aid, without interest and with long period of repayment and with extreme flexibility in its utilisation as between project and non-project.

With Canada also we have growing ties. We have been working together for many years in the International Control Commission and on many international problems. We

have co-operated and we have tried and are trying to seek peaceful solution of world problems.

Hon. Members are also aware of our efforts in the Security Council to work towards a resolution which could provide the basis for the U.N. Mediator to restore normality in the West Asian region. We welcome the resolution and we offer our good wishes to the Mediator in the very delicate task which he has undertaken. We believe that normal and stable conditions should be restored in that region, as soon as possible in the interest of the country concerned and, if I may say so, in our own national interest. The territories occupied by force should be vacated and the just rights of the people should be recognised.

We welcome the establishment of the independent Republic of South Yemen, which is another country with which we have had close ties and traditional links. We are glad that at the present moment this relationship has been very greatly strengthened and there is the friendliest of feelings between the people of South Yemen and ourselves.

With the countries of Africa and Latin America also our relations remain friendly. We share the same world-view and the same desire to safeguard our respective soverignties and to promote international co-operation. By and large, in this area also the trend has been to remain away from ideological, military and political groupings and rivalries so that they could concentrate their attention on more positive and mutually beneficial links.

One cannot look at Africa without also seeing a few black spots which remain there...

We have on many occasions expressed our indignation at the efforts of small minorities to subjugate the vast majority of inhabitants in disregard to the expressed sentiment of the United Nations and of the world community.

As far as Europe is concerned, we have no bilateral disputes either with western European countries or with countries of eastern Europe. In different ways both these regions have been contributing to our economic progress. We recognise the economic strength and progress which these countries have made in recent years and we welcome this process of closer economic, technological and cultural connections which are now being built up with India.

But we do feel, as I mentioned earlier on, that Europe and specially the more advanced countries of Europe, can do a great deal more to enable us to trade with them which alone can place out economic relations on a secure basis. We are fully aware of their own difficulties–the problems of European security and so on–and we hope that they will be resolved peacefully.

The visit of the German Chancellor has greatly added to the understanding of our respective problems and, I feel, has laid the foundations of closer economic, cultural and scientific collaboration with the Federal Republic of Germany.

Our co-operation with the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. continues to develop over a wide field of economic, scientific and cultural activities. We appreciate greatly the friendly assistance which they have both given and the faith they have shown in our own efforts to

fulfill our national objectives. The generous food and economic assistance from the U.S.A. is a proof of their understanding of and interest in our problems and our objectives. At the same time, the extensive programme of economic co-operation with the U.S.S.R. provides an equal proof of our common interest in safeguarding and promoting international co-operation.

In this picture which is one of harmoniously developing relationship it is unfortunate that I have to mention that the situation still remains unsatisfactory with regard to two of our neighbours. China continues to maintain an attitude of hostility towards us and, as hon. Members know, spares no opportunity to malign us and to carry on anti-Indian propaganda not only against the Indian Government but the whole way of our democratic functioning and even our national integrity. But I would like to say that we do not harbour any evil intentions towards the Chinese people and we do hope that a day will come when they will also realise that it is to the interest of all the countries of South East Asia that we should be friends and that each country should be able to devote its strength to solving the very major problems of combating poverty, backwardness and all the attending evils.

With Pakistan we have had and still have the many common bonds of history, tradition and culture and, therefore, it is all the more regrettable that our relationship has followed such an uneven course. We, on our part, would certainly like to see the people of Pakistan prosper and progress and to have friendly neighbourly relations with them because, here again, we believe that friendly relations between India and Pakistan would contribute to the strength of both the nations and would help them both to achieve a better life for their people without our attention being diverted to other purposes. It is for this reason that we welcome the signing of the Tashkent Declaration and even now, in spite of all the obstacles which we face, we continue to do our utmost on our side to see that it is implemented.

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But the House is well aware how difficult this is. The immediate need, we feel, is to heal the wounds caused by the conflict of 1965 and to normalise our relations. This is what we have been trying to pursue with the Government of Pakistan.

The development of mutually beneficial economic and other relationships should not follow the consideration of more tangled political questions but should precede them and should aim at creating a friendly atmosphere. On our part, I should like to say that we shall not miss any opportunity of having a fruitful dialogue in order that such a feeling of trust and understanding is gradually restored and avenues are opened out for better collaboration on various issues.

We have not lagged behind in our efforts to promote disarmament because, again, for the same reason, we believe that the resources of the world should be turned to, constructive and productive uses. Therefore, while we have reservations on partial or discriminatory arrangements for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, we share the belief that such an unprecedented reservoir of energy should be used for peaceful and not for destructive purposes.

In this connection, I mention the Second UNCTAD Conference which will be meeting in New Delhi very soon, in early next month. All our members are already aware of the

growing disparity between the developed and the developing nations. While the *per capita* income of the people in the developed countries, in recent years, has been rising, on an average, I am told, by 60 dollars per year, that of the people of the developing countries has been rising by only 2 dollars per year. Similarly, the goods manufactured by developed countries are becoming more expensive while the prices of the goods which we manufacture or which come from other developing countries are falling, thereby reducing our purchasing power.

Sometime ago, it was felt that effort should be made to find ways to transfer in an orderly and peaceful manner resources which are essential for rapid economic growth of the developing countries and that is why the Secretary-General of the U.N. had suggested the Development Decade. Unfortunately these efforts have also been in vain and have not succeeded at all. Instead of the gap being bridged, we see that it has been considerably widened.

Now, another effort will be made at the Second UNCTAD Conference to hold this trend and help to enable developing countries to acquire greater resources for their own accelerated economic progress. The developing countries are not asking for aid; they are not asking for charity or for any grant. But they are asking only for the opportunity to trade and to acquire greater possibilities of the transfer of resources from those countries which can afford them and which, in the long run, is to their own interest. It is recognised today, as we recognise in our own internal position, that prosperity cannot belong to only a few. Just as in our country, we see it cannot belong to a limited number of persons or certain classes, in the same way, in the whole world community also, unless opportunities are shared we cannot have world peace. Therefore, we must continue with our efforts to enable all the less developed countries to build a better life.

While shaping foreign policy, national interest must, naturally, always be kept in view both from the political point of view and from the economic point of view. At the same time, we must keep our sights on long-term perspective. Conditions, locally or in any given area, may change and sometimes, because of these changes, we may have to take up a new programme. But this should not divert us in any way from our basic values. There will always be ups and downs for any country. In fact, there are ups and downs for all countries, even those which are advanced and which have the possibilities of solving their problems with the resources at their disposal. Even they see ups and downs, even they see that their policies are not always succeeding, are not always bringing the results for which they work and which they hope for. But our aim, while we can make adjustments for any new position that arises, should be not to divert from the basic principles and to do nothing which would bring discredit to the country. We should have faith in ourselves and always so mould our thinking and our actions as to serve the long-term interests of the country. It is sometimes when you get diverted by what seems to be in your interest today, that you see that you have moved away from what is really in the long-term interest of the country and of the people.

With these words, I should like to commend this Motion for the consideration of the House.

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†Hon. Sondhiji has also expressed his views. He has said that Soviet Russia's policy towards India has changed. This is also an issue over which, discussion has become somewhat a fashion. But we do not have any such information. We have very close relations with them. We discussed various issue with them but there has not been any trace which could show that they have changed their policy towards us. Our relations with them are still very close. The help being provided by them is a proof of it....*

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I am answering all questions. Some other points were raised. One is the normal one about our not saying...that we are camp followers of one block of the other. I am not going into it here again.

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Unfortunately, although the blocks had been blurred it does seem some of them are still there. One thing that I want to make clear is this–wherever we think that justice or freedom is attacked, there we have always taken a very positive stand.

The other question raised was, why is it that in some matters we do speak up and in other matters, hon. Members feel, perhaps we do not speak up. We speak or we do not speak according to the effect we think it will have on the future development, whether our saying something is going to help in finding a solution or it is going to help us in going on the path of finding a peaceful solution or whether our saying something or taking a stand is going to achieve the opposite result. This is the guide, along with the question of national interest which can never be ignored at any time.

One hon. Member** has compared our recognition of Israel with our non-recognition, as they put it, of the GDR. There is a difference in these two positions. We have recognised Israel, as I have said here before in the House, because it is a member of the United Nations and it is recognised by the United Nations.

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But GDR is not a member of the United Nations. With regard to China the situation is again different. Here is one government which is controlling the vast masses of the people of China, the vast mainland of China, and it seems very unrealistic to me to ignore that Government and say that only the Government which is occupying a small island off the mainland is the true government, because neither of these people believe in the theory of two Chinas and both of them claim to represent the China, the only one China.

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No, we do not.***

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† Translated from Hindi.

* While replying to the debate on the motion.

** Shri G. Viswanathan.

*** Replying to Shri Bal Raj Madhok's remarks : "It is not a question of what they say. The question is whether we recognise two Chinas or not ?"

There are many facts of life*. The fact of life is not that only the island is there.

However, even with regard to them we have allowed them to come here. They are allowed to visit the country and many of our Members of Parliament have also been there.

The hon. Member, Shri Sondhi, has made two entirely contradictory statements. First he said that we should have some diplomatic initiative with regard to China and in the very next breath he said that he did not think that our mission should continue there or that we should have relations with China. I have told the House on other occasions also that we do not have a closed mind on any issue. Although we follow certain paths, we follow them when we consider that they are the right paths for us to go on. But foreign policy, or for that matter any policy, has to be dynamic. It has to be something which takes cognisance of the changing pattern in the world and the Government of India is fully aware of the changes which are taking place. We are fully in touch with what is happening in these other countries. But in spite of that, as I said in my earlier remarks, certain basic policies cannot be abandoned. Our basic policy is to be on the side of peace and freedom and to be anti-oppression and anti all that causes some of these evils....

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Many a time something seems to be in our interest today but it is not necessarily in our interest in the long term.

That is why both with regard to Pakistan and China, although the Government of India must be fully prepared and be fully on guard against any threat, in spite of that we do not have a closed mind. We do want to have friendship. We do want to open up any kind of avenue which can lead to better understanding or which can lead to a solution of problems.

I do not know whether hon. Members expect the Government to come and announce every information that comes to them or what they intend to do about such information and so on. The whole point of diplomacy is not to make it public because one makes many initiatives some of which bear fruit and many do not. But even those which do bear fruit could not do so perhaps, if they receive publicity ahead of time.

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All diplomacy is secret. There is no such thing as non-secret diplomacy really because it becomes something different if you are openly talking about it.

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Even with it usually we find that the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra Party are together on foreign affairs but we found a slight shift this time. It is perhaps a welcome shift. While the hon. Member, Shri Masani, spoke quite a long while about the type of friendship which we have with the Soviet Union and whereas as he did not say it in so many words, I certainly got the impression that he felt that it was not worth our while but, on the other

* Responding to Shri Bal Raj Madhok's observation, "Then we do not recognise a fact of life".

hand, the hon. Member, Shri Sondhi, did say that it was very important for us to have friendly relations with the Soviet Union.

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I want to assure the hon. Member that in this one thing I agree with him hundred per cent*. We do want friendship with both the countries. Not only do we want friendship with both the countries but we do have friendship with both the countries. I would also like to assure the hon. Member that there is no question of subservience.

The hon. Member, Shri Sondhi, made a most extra-ordinary remark here. I do not know whether I have got his actual words here. But he said something about somebody pressurising me on Kashmir. Obviously, he has not a clue how heads of States meet or how they talk. I want to say that I shall, certainly, not tolerate any Head of the State or anybody dictating me what I should do in my country. It is an unheard of thing and it is simply a thing which is not permissible.

I am very sorry that in spite of repeatedly telling Members specifically about Vietnam and so on, the Members of the Communist Party and some other also went on repeating the same old thing that when I went to different countries, I spoke different things. Now, I cannot, obviously, take the time of the House and bring all the papers here and read out my statements. But they are welcome to read them. In every country, most of these remarks were made in answer to questions and, therefore, that particular question had to be answered. If you read my answers, there is no question of suspicion or doubt as to my giving a different emphasis even, whether it was Vietnam or any other question, whether I was in the United States or U.S.S.R. or Delhi or anywhere else. Our stand is clearly stated, not only by me when I go there but also when their leaders come here, and also by other representatives of the Government of India. I can assure them that there is no misunderstanding on this score in any of the countries which I visited. Of course, there are some countries which do not approve of certain stands which we take.

Then, the hon. Member of the D.M.K. Party was anxious that we should take initiatives in the U.N. I should like to tell him that India has been taking initiatives and, in fact, it was India's initiative which was responsible for enlarging the membership of the Security Council, to make it more representative of the nations of Asia and Africa. India has taken initiatives in the United Nations on many other occasions, and many of them have borne fruit. It is not that they were initiatives which were lost. Even with regard to the present resolution about U.N. mediator going to West Asia, India has played a tremendous part in it and all nations have acknowledged the part which India has played there.

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Then, there is one other point which some of our hon. Members are keen on making, that is, assumption of leadership by India of certain countries. This is very understandable.

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* Replying to Shri Bal Raj Madhok's remarks : "We want to have friendly relations with both America and Russia. But we do not want to be subservient either to Russia or to America".

Naturally, I think, every country would wish that it should take up the leadership of other countries. But I may submit very humbly that it is a sort of remark that creates misunderstanding in other countries because no other country wants either India or anybody else to be the leader. Each country wants to be the leader itself. India also does not want to lead any country because we believe that it is only when all the smaller countries are strong, both economically and politically, that they can play their part in world affairs and they can protect themselves from all forms of wrong influence from outside. One of our basic principles which I talked of earlier is non-interference in the affairs of other countries. We believe in being friends with other countries, but we do not necessarily agree with what happens in those countries. Similarly, many of our friends probably do not agree with some of the things which we say or do. But we feel that they should not come in the way of friendship or of our co-operation on those matters in which we do agree. The whole point behind that much used and abused world, "co-existence" is that you should be able to live in peace with people who are of different ideologies and that you should find areas of co-operation with them and you should be able to enlarge those areas of co-operation. It is only in that way that we can hope to build peace in our country.

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I forgot a very important point made by hon. Member, Mr. Sondhi. He spoke, a great deal of nepotism in Foreign Service. On this, if he has any specific cases, I should be very glad to have them. But this matter has been brought up on some earlier occasions and we have looked into them. But the point which he made that the local based staff consists of relatives of the Ambassador and so on, I must submit, is not true. But I would say that if he has any specific cases in mind, I should be very glad to have those names and we would look into them.

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Sometimes one cannot avoid having local-based people and this is specially true of a place like London where for historic and other reasons, the staff had grown enormously, and as hon. Members know, that matter has also been looked into and is further being looked into; it is being quite drastically cut; it is not being increased; it is being quite drastically cut.

Some hon. Members think, much as they would like it to be, that we are perhaps confused in what we want to do and what we are thinking. I want to assure the hon. Members that this is far from the case.

We are very clear about the Government of India's policy and we are absolutely sure that it is not only the right policy but that it is the only policy that can be followed in the circumstances of the particular question in different parts of the world and in view of the condition in which India is to-day. And the Government of India is fully determined to pursue this policy and I can assure hon. Members...

That this policy is, in spite of people not always being with it in other parts of the world, in spite of that, it is appreciated and the proof of the appreciation is : why do people attach so much importance to what we think or what we say or what we do.

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They do*. It may disappoint Mr. Masani and Mr. Masani has been saying this practically from the first day even when some other hon. Members thought that India was the leader of the un-developed world. Even at that time he thought that India's voice was not heard. India's voice is heard and the ample proof of it was given in the last session of the United Nations.

* Responding to Shri M.R. Masani's remark, "Do they ?"

A Broad Look at Foreign Policy*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there have been many interesting speeches in his debate. There are over a hundred cut motions but the main points which have concerned hon. Members are Vietnam and the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

I was glad that the speeches this time were more pointed and did not attempt to range over the whole of human history. I am glad also to see that the induction of hon. Member, Shri Sondhi, into the Jana Sangh Parliamentary Party has brought a new awareness of foreign policy in that party. Before that, they were constantly blaming us for paying far too much attention to international affairs.

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The hon. Members of the Congress Party have lightened my task by dealing very ably with most of the points which have been raised by the Opposition. The hon. Member who initiated the debate, Shri Masani, seemed to have made a speech in defence of America, pleading for U.S. policies at a time when U.S. itself is engaged in revising them and trying to change them. The timing of the debate is such that it is natural that our attention should be specially focussed on Vietnam. On the 31st March, President Johnson made a speech of historic significance. It was a courageous initiative and I am glad it has evoked a positive response from Hanoi. Shri Masani used a rather strange word—I believe, he said that the United States Government had done what we, that is, the Government, had been "clamouring" for. I do not know with what significance Shri Masani meant to clothe that word 'clamour'. Was there a certain disappointment that the United States should have taken a step which approximates 90 per cent to what we had been advocating for some considerable time and that our stand, so long maligned, so long criticised, now stood vindicated ? When faced with such moments in human history, it is not enough to come out with statements and to rush to the press. It is important to examine the issues posed, to initiate processes and consultations. This we have been doing. We have been in touch with a number of friendly countries both through their Ambassadors and through our own Missions there. I sent personal messages both to President Johnson and to President Ho Chi Minh and I am sure that we would all like to see that these processes which have been set afoot will reach ultimate fruition in bringing peace to the tortured land of Vietnam.

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* Replying to the debate on the Demands for Grants, Ministry of External Affairs, 1968, *L.S. Deb.*, 5 April, 1968, cc. 2677–90.

Our effort has always been directed towards the narrowing of whatever differences still exist and in overcoming whatever difficulties remain. We hope that the two sides will meet and we hope that, as a result of this meeting, conditions will be created for an uninterrupted dialogue. We have always felt that the Geneva Agreement of 1954 provides the framework within which the Vietnam problem could be resolved.

If I may refer once more to my distinguished friend, Shri Masani, he presumed that our stand in favour of the cessation of bombing of North Vietnam was based on our advocacy of North Vietnam's cause, I may say that the question of the cessation of bombing of North Vietnam has been advocated by a very large number of countries and by the distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations, because all these people realise that the issues in Vietnam are susceptible only to political solutions and that there could be no military solution to the problem. We believe also that these issues are far too serious to be made a subject of partisan propaganda. We have assured all the parties concerned that both as a peace-loving country and as Member Chairman of the International Control Commission, we would always be willing to shoulder whatever responsibilities devolved upon us.

We are glad that we are not alone in this. We have the support of many countries and the vast majority of mankind. We should like to share with them the task of bringing peace to Vietnam. It is understandable that there is still considerable mutual suspicion and questioning of motives. Statements by one side are not taken at their face value by the other. It is our task to bridge this gap of suspicion and distrust which divides the two sides. Hence our effort to contact all concerned parties and to bring them closer together in the hope and belief, that direct contacts may perhaps pave the way towards sincere and genuine contacts which would lead to a solution.

References were made by many Members to the question of the security of the South-East Asian region. My colleague, the Minister of State, Shri Bhagat dealt with this in his speech yesterday. Some Members accused us of not playing an effective role in developing regional security arrangement for the defence of South and South-East Asian countries from Chinese expansionism. Hon. Member, Shri Sondhi, also spoke of this. I am glad that he has recently discovered Combodia. We have had long-standing and friendly relations with that country and, in particular, with the distinguished head of the State, Prince Sihanouk. Those relations are purposeful and are based on mutual understanding, trust and confidence. There was concern amongst some parties that we should enter into agreements or arrangements with different nations of this region. Now, when we look back into recent history–the post-war era, we find it littered with the remains of dead and dying security arrangements. I believe that this is bound to happen when international relations are subordinated to opportunist considerations. Our concept is different from that of the Swatantra Party and the Jan Sangh; our policies are not governed by conditioned reflexes but by deeper considerations. The security of South and South-East Asia will not be made more secure by alliances or treaties. We believe that security will grow out of mutual cooperation and the growth of identity of interests, and on our part, we have been doing everything possible to explore all avenues of such mutual cooperation in economic and

other fields. We hope that when peace comes to Vietnam, the real security needs of the area will be seen more clearly. The main security is the strengthening of these countries, and I do not believe that they can be strengthened by any kind of foreign interference.

Let us take a broad look at our external relations over the past year or so. Any objective observer will admit, and the overall impression that we got from the speeches of even those hon. Members who seem to oppose our policies was, that we have not been so badly off after all. With our two immediate and difficult neighbours, there has been no deterioration of relations. With Pakistan we are straining every nerve to effect some improvement and I have no doubt that we can succeed. Of course, it is not possible to have any spectacular or dramatic development. But we must work, we must make an attempt to work, together. Just now, the hon. Member, Shri Hem Barua, said something about having blind faith in the Tashkent agreement. It is not only that the Tashkent agreement is a matter of principle; it is mainly an instrument, through which the two countries could normalise their relations. We have had many difficulties in its implementation; we are far from implementing it perfectly or even in a large degree, but, nevertheless, I can say that we have proceeded a little bit in that direction. Some small steps have been taken and I personally feel that the atmosphere is better. But here again the responsibility lies on all of us. Because, being such close neighbours, having the type of contacts which we have had, having also the history of bitterness which we have had between us, any stray remark made by anybody can be exaggerated, misconstrued and lead to straining of relations. Therefore, this is a matter in which...(*Interruptions*) we must all endeavour to try to improve the relations.

Voices have been raised here on this occasion and on other occasions demanding that we should quit the Commonwealth. I am not insensitive to the feelings which impel such demands. As I have said on previous occasion, leaving the Commonwealth cannot be considered as a mere subjective response to any given situation. Historically speaking, we joined the Commonwealth at a time when the world was divided into two hostile and opposing camps. And it made sense that some countries which were not involved with either of these camps should get together and explore their own common interests. Subsequently, with the rising tide of liberation, more countries became free and they became members of the Commonwealth. Today there are 22 member States drawn from the areas extending from the Caribbean Sea to the Pacific and embracing all continents of this earth. It is true that the festering of the Rhodesian sore is poisoning Commonwealth relations and the longer it is allowed to do so, the more corrossive will be its influence on the health of the Commonwealth. We are aware of this and deeply concerned. So are other Members of the Commonwealth. We hope, however, that the collective wisdom of Members of the Commonwealth will help to solve this problem and to retain the multi-racial character of this association.

With the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R., our contacts are increasing and our relations are developing very favourably in all fields. With the sister nations of Africa and of Asia there is, by and large, a record of progress.

One hon. Member referred to black recialism. Racialism, whether it be black or white, is anathema to the civilised world. We here in India have a proud record of fighting

racialism in all its forms. We have done this not because of any moral sense of duty, but because we realise that the world cannot be stable if the political and economic conflicts are made more complex by a new dimension of racial conflicts. We shall continue to strive against racialism in all its manifestations. We have the friendliest of feelings for our breathren in Africa. We understand their difficulties many of which are due to the remnants of the old colonialism. We have to fight against this and we shall do so.

In the Commonwealth we have had many ups and downs and yet, on the whole, here again, friendship and cooperation is growing.

With the Socialist countries of Europe friendly ties continue to strengthen, especially, in the fields of economic and commercial exchanges. West European countries have also shown friendship towards us in many ways which we have tried to reciprocate.

Smt. Pandit made some thoughtful remarks.

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I was a little surprised to hear her suggesting that because of our relationship with England or the Commonwealth, we had neglected our relations with France. Far from it, Sir, in the last two years we have come much closer not only to the Government of France but also, if I might say so, with the people of France. My hon. friend interrupted just now to say that I was not here to hear her speech.* But I would like to tell him that I heard every word of all the speeches delivered before lunch.

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Both with France and the Federal Republic of Germany our relations are advancing steadily.

The countries of Latin America, though geographically distant, share many ideals with us and we hope to do more to know each other better and cooperate in various fields. But I realise that much more needs to be done and that in the past we have been a little aloof.

Except for some minor disappointments and occasional irritations we can confidently say that we have moved steadily forward in our international relationships and contacts. What is more, we have strengthened our existing friendships and have built bridges to expand our relations with others.

I should add that with our two neighbours on our western flank, we are establishing new relationships of mutual confidence and understanding. We were happy to welcome to Delhi, even though briefly, His Majesty the Shah of Iran, with whom we had a useful exchange of views which we are confident will lead to the strengthening of our relations in the future. With the Foreign Minister of Turkey also a wide spectrum of problems was discussed and I feel that we understand each other a little better now. Economic exchanges are developing very satisfactorily with both these countries and this will provide a sound framework for building up a relationship based on mutual confidence and respect.

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* In reply to a Member's remark, "But you were not here when she spoke."

In Foreign Affairs there are no set positions. Some of these countries have not always been very friendly to us. I believe, that where there is friendship we must enlarge it, where there is indifference, we must remove it, and where there is hostility, we should try to blunt it. What are permanent are certain values and interests on which we cannot compromise.

Now I come to China. Some hon. Member have spoken of cutting off relations with China altogether; on the other hand some have talked of raising them to Ambassadorial level. We have diplomatic relations with a large number of countries. In fashioning these relations, we do not look into the political and social composition of the Governments concerned. We believe that that is the responsibility of the people of the country concerned. What happens internally in other countries cannot be a subject-matter of public comment.

The hon. Member, Shri Sondhi, criticised me for not giving a report on some of the countries of Eastern Europe. But if a dignitary visiting our country were to return and make a report on the internal affairs of India, I am sure that hon. Members would not be pleased. Our differences with China arose mainly from the fact that China is not prepared to accept this elementary code of international conduct. The day they accept it, we would have gone a long way towards normalising our relations. I have no doubt that through a process of trial and error, the Chinese Government will one day realise that the world is much too complex to be reduced to some uniform pattern however shining and bright that pattern might appear in the eyes of the hot gospellers of our present day world.

Hon. Member, Shri Umanath, should understand a very simple and elementary proposition. It is that India's social transformation can only be effected by the people of India themselves, in the light of their own history, tradition and experience. It will not be effected by Mao's thoughts and little red books.

A hardy annual which comes up with monotonous regularity concerns the functioning of our diplomatic missions abroad. The work of our missions must, of necessity, be performed quietly, without any fanfare or publicity. That is the very nature of diplomacy, involving a careful survey of the ground, meticulous preparation and discreet contacts and discussions. The fact that our relations with countries all over the globe have been advancing is due, in no small measure, to the silent efforts of our missions. Our Foreign Service had to be created from scratch and we had no precedents or previous experience to go by. Yet, our diplomats have established great reputation abroad and in all international gatherings their voices, raised on behalf of the country, are heard with attenuon. And some have been singled out for service on important international missions.

The critics of our missions sometimes tend to judge their performance by impressions casually gathered during fleeting visits. Such judgements are fair neither to the critics themselves nor to our missions. Of course I must admit that there is always room for improvement and we are constantly trying to improve the performance of our missions.

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And, any incident or information that comes to the knowledge of hon. Members of Parliament is always useful to us in seeing how these Services and Missions can be improved. But when we talk of publicity abroad or of the image of India which our Missions are projecting, let us remember that we are dealing with sovereign independent States who have their own assessments of their national interests. They are not concerned with our national interests; they are concerned with what picture suits them and that is the picture which is normally projected in that country.

Our task, therefore, is to seek their cooperation in matters where our interests converge as they do with many countries and to seek adjustment and accommodation wherever there are divergencies.

This process is a continuing one in the capitals of the world. In criticising our missions, it seems that Shri Hem Barua would also hold the Government of India responsible for the misprints or mistakes of British newspapers !

Amongst the measures taken to obtain better performance has been our decision to make our Heads of Missions themselves responsible for public relations work as well as the promotion of economic relations. This should give a stimulus to our efforts to improve our trade situation and to establish solid economic ties with other countries. Public relations work needs an imaginative approach, and one cannot have any set rules. With our Heads of Missions paying personal attention, we hope that the impact will be greater. But as I have said before, our image abroad will inevitably be a reflection of our situation at home. We know, when we passed through a difficult period of food shortage last year, what a very bad image of India was projected all over the world. Now that the situation has improved that image also is a vastly improved one. We hope that the country will now present a picture of unity and not of division, of progress and not of stagnation, of purposeful activity and not of meaningless dissension. All this will condition and influence our external relations and what others think of us.

I now come to the question with which not only Members of Parliament but the entire country seems to be deeply concerned. Almost everybody who spoke has spoken of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. I myself....

*** *** ***

made a statement on that subject in this House on the 14th March. That statement stands. I should like to assure the House that we shall be guided entirely by our enlightened self-interest and the considerations of national security and, of course, adherence to our values, as Shri D.C. Sharma has pointed out.

We have already made it clear that the draft treaty in its present form does not fully conform to the principles enunciated in the General Assembly Resolution No. 2028 of the 20th session.

Mankind today is at the crossroads of nuclear peace and nuclear war. There can be no doubt that we should take the road to nuclear peace. But the first step in this direction is

not yet in sight. It is vitally important, therefore, for the nuclear weapons powers to undertake as soon as possible meaningful negotiations on a series of measures leading to nuclear disarmament. The present draft treaty acknowledges the need for such negotiations, but unfortunately, the non-participation by some nuclear weapon powers will make it only partially effective, and what is more, the other nuclear weapon powers insist on their right to continue to manufacture more nuclear weapons. This is a situation which cannot be viewed with equanimity by non-nuclear countries, especially as they are called upon to undertake not to manufacture or acquire nuclear weapons for their own defence.

At the same time, we have stated that the Government of India do not propose to manufacture nuclear weapons. This is a decision taken many years ago and is unrelated to the treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We shall continue our efforts for nuclear disarmament because it is only through nuclear disarmament that discrimination would be eliminated and equality between nations re-established.

The draft treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons will now be discussed by the resumed session of the General Assembly towards the end of April this year. Several amendments have already been proposed by some non-nuclear countries and there may be more to come. These amendments will receive our careful consideration, and we shall continue to impress upon the nuclear powers the need for a balanced and non-discriminatory treaty.

The issue before us in essentially a political one. And it also has serious implications as regards security matters. The treaty and all its implications are under continuous study and the Government will give careful thought to the views of Members as expressed in this House.

All parties, with the exception of the hon. Member Shri M.R. Masani, have generally supported the stand taken by the Government of India in not signing the treaty in its present form. Government are fully aware of the serious issues involved. I would again assure the House that in any decision taken, the best interests of the country and of world peace will guide and inform our deliberations.

At the same time, I should also like to warn the House and the country that not signing the treaty may bring the nation many difficulties. It may mean the stoppage of aid and the stoppage of help....

*** *** ***

That was just what I was going to say.* Since we are taking this decision together, we must all be together in facing its consequences. I personally think that although it may involve sacrifice and hardship, it will be the first step towards building the real strength of this country and we shall be able to go ahead on the road to self-sufficiency.

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* Referring to Shri M.L. Sondhi's remark, "Freedom was won with sacrifices."

The hon. Member Shri V. Krishnamoorthi's speech showed a recognition that foreign policy concerns and touches our national interests and should not, therefore, be viewed in terms of party politics. I earnestly hope that this trend will gain wider acceptance and will govern our attitude towards our foreign policy.

I would now commend for the acceptance of the House the Demands for Grants placed before them and express the hope that the various cut motions would not be pressed.

India and West Asia*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, nearly two weeks ago, my collegue, the Minister of External Affairs, made a statement in this House giving Government's assessment of the explosive situation in West Asia and expressing our deep concern at the developments that were taking place there.

Since then, our efforts in the Security Council as well as outside have been concentrated on counselling moderation and lessening of tension and preservation of peace in that area. Our representative in the Security Council in consultation with the non-permanent members of the Council and others made earnest endeavours to formulate a resolution which might be acceptable to the Council. The resolution aimed at supporting the Secretary General's recommendations contained in his reports to the Council and earnestly appealing to all parties concerned to exercise restraint in order to avoid actions which might aggravate tension. Our Representative met with favourable response and it was hoped that in the next meeting of the Security Council, significant progress would be made in this regard.

While these efforts were still continuing, news came yesterday morning of an outbreak of hostilities between Israel and the U.A.R. and other Arab countries.

The Secretary General of the United Nations made a report to the Emergency Meeting of the Security Council yesterday, in which he gave an account of various reports by the UNEF Commander and the U.N. Observers on the UN Truce Supervision Organisation and Mixed Armistic Commissions, of attacks by Israeli air craft on U.A.R. and Syrian territory.

I do not wish to utter harsh words or use strong language. But on the basis of information available there can be no doubt that Israel has escalated the situation into an armed conflict, which has now acquired the proportions of a full scale war.

The world today faces a disastrous war in West Asia. The armed forces of Israel and those of U.A.R.. and other Arab countries are locked in combat, and the situation becomes graver by the hour. If not stopped, this war is likely to expand into a much wider one, drawing into its vortex other countries and developing perhaps into a world war. World peace is in grave peril. Our own national interests are bound up with peace are stability in West Asia. I do not need to expand on this or to describe the horrors and consequences of

* Statement regarding developments in West Asia, *L.S. Deb.*, 6 June, 1967, cc. 3292–95, 3314–18, 3321–22.

such a war in West Asia. It is our solemn duty as a Government as also that of the hon. Members of Parliament to help in the restoration of peace in the present perilous situation. It is the bounden duty of all countries, large and small, to work towards this end.

In the Security Council we are making earnest efforts for a ceasefire and withdrawal of all armed forces to the positions they occupied on June 4th. We shall presevere in these efforts.

Hon. Members have no doubt learnt with deep resentment of the wanton Isarel artillery attack and subsequent strafings by Israel aircraft resulting in the death and injury of a number of personnel of the Indian UNEF contingent in Gaza. These attacks were deliberate and without provocation inspite of clear and unmistakable UN markings and identification of our contingent.

I have addressed a message to the Secretary General of the United Nations on this subject, expressing our grief and indignation at these incidents and I have asked for effective steps to be taken to ensure their safety and early evacuation from the area of hostilities. Five of our soldiers have died and several have been wounded. There can be no justification for Israel armed forces to have attacked our forces, whose whereabouts, indentification markings and intention to withdraw were clearly known to the Israeli authorities.

Government will naturally give adequate compensation to the families of five soldiers who have lost their lives and we shall make sure that the amount is not less than what they would have received had these men lost their lives in active combat. Meanwhile, I am sending a sum of Rs. 25,000/, *i.e.* Rs. 5,000/- per family, by way of immediate assistance to the bereaved families from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund.

I am sure the House will unreservedly condemn this cowardly attack on our men, who have been sentinels of peace in West Asia. The Secretary General has lodged a strong protest with the Israel Government. I should like on behalf of the whole House, to convey our deep sympathies and condolences to the bereaved families of our soldiers who have gallantly laid down their lives in the service of humanity and in the cause of peace.

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Sir, I was very glad to learn that all Members have supported the stand, we have taken at the United Nations....

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With reservations*. Even so, their conditional support is welcome. I am sure that if this resolution can get through, it will be a big step forward in the interest of peace in that area.

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* Replying to a Member who quipped : "With reservation".

Certain points were made by hon. Members. Firstly, it was asked: why was the statement made at this time, should we not have taken a more—I forget the word used, perhaps 'neutral' was the word....

*** *** ***

Well, cautious*. Now, India has existed as an independent nation for about 20 years. We have not made our mark in the world by being cautious. We have made our mark in the world by taking a firm stand where justice was concerned, where peace was concerned. Non-alignment has never meant that we should be neutral. In fact, in all forums of the world we have deplored the use of the word 'neutral' as a definition of non-alignment. Non-alignment does not mean neutrality. No thinking person can remain uninvolved with what is happening. We cannot. Even when we were not free, when we were not in a position to help other nations, we did speak up against injustice where it existed....(*Interruptions*). I hope the hon. Members will try to study the entire situation.

Some reference has been made here as to what has led to this situation. Shri Prakash Vir Shastri has asked whether it was the U.A.R. action in Aqaba or anything else which caused this. It goes much further back and I do not think that it helps now to go into any of the steps as he has suggested just now.

The foreign policy which we have formulated, what we have said here today, or the foreign policy which we are pursuing is part of the foreign policy which this nation has adhered to in the past years.

*** *** ***

Mr. Speaker, as you yourself were here, you have heard the speeches from the other side and you have seen that they have not spoken with one voice. Therefore, they cannot say that this divided opinion is the voice of the nation...(*Interruptions*). I believe that the policy followed by the Government of India was firmly supported by the nation. It has certainly given us a position in the world, it has enabled us to intervene in many a situation and to bring about peace in a manner which I think no other nation has been able to bring about. No matter what the Members of the opposition may say, these are facts of history which they cannot now change.

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Whatever policy we follow, is in the national interest. It is not followed because of a vague whim just in the air. It is followed in the interest of our nation, the economic and political interests of our nation.

With regard to the shipment of food to India, naturally, if the Suez Canal is blocked and, we believe, it has been blocked, there will be dislocation and delay and there will be difficulty. But this will not substantially affect our rice supply a much of it comes from the other direction. Some quantity is due from U.A.R. and Spain. This will be delayed as

* Responding to a Member's remark, "Cautious".

specially Spanish ships will have to go round the Cape of Good Hope. Wheat and milo will also be affected. But I do not think this situation will have any grave repercussions.

One point which several hon. Members have made here and which they had made to me earlier on when we met is regarding the statement which is alleged to have been made about the destruction of Israel. I have said so before and I have no hesitation in saying so again that we do not stand for the destruction of any nation.

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The other question was regarding the attitude of the Arab countries and more specifically of the U.A.R. during our own troubles here....

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With regard to U.A.R. during the Chinese aggression, the U.A.R. Presidential Council made a public statement in which the U.A.R. proposed cease-fire and withdrawal of the Chinese forces to the 8th September position....

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I have only one or two points to make. It is about the evacuation of our men from Gaza. In accordance with the agreement between the United Nations and the seven participating countries, the withdrawal of the Indian contingent in Gaza is the responsibility of the United Nations. It was arranged with the Secretary General that an Indian ship will sail on the 8th June for the withdrawal of the evacuees. India was willing to withdraw the Indian contingent earlier, but the U.N. expressed their inability to agree to evacuation by air. Once again I have, in my message to the Secretary General, asked him to try and get them away from the fighting zone: if they cannot come to India, they may at least be removed away from the area of hostilities as soon as possible.

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...The point is whether we should say anything and what we should say at a given moment, and whether we should take sides or not. I think that we have made a very genuine effort to be objective, and I think that an objective presentation of the facts of the situation can help in the restoration of peace especially in a perilous situation. It does not help peace to sit on the fence and not to take a definite viewpoint, and this is why we have taken it. As I said, simultaneously we have taken a step at the United Nations. I sincerely hope that we be successful in our resolution. We shall always encourage any step which will lead to a cessation of the fighting there and the restoration of real peace.

Territorial Dimension of Indo-Pak Relations : Construction of Mangla Dam*

Sir, while overflying West Pakistan on my way to Moscow, as is customary, I sent a message of greetings to the President of Pakistan. I expressed the hope that the successful conclusion of the talks on the restoration of telecommunications would lead to further progress in our mutual relations. I also conveyed my congratulations on the completion of the Mangla Dam. This did not imply any departure from our stand as to the status of the territory of the State of Jammu and Kashmir on the other side of the cease-fire line.

The Indus Waters Treaty was signed by India and Pakistan in September, 1960. It was placed before the Lok Sabha in November, 1960 and ratified in December, 1960. As provided in the preamble, the treaty had for its aim; and I quote:

the most complete and satisfactory utilisation of the waters of the Indus system of rivers.

by India and Pakistan. Accordingly, the treaty allocated the waters of the three western rivers, that is, Indus, Jhelum and the Chenab, to Pakistan and those of the Sutlej, Ravi and the Beas to India. As provided in article IV(I) of the treaty, and I quote :

> Pakistan shall use its best endeavours to construct and bring into operation with due regard to expedition and economy that part of a system of works which will accomplish the replacement from the western rivers and other sources of water supplies for irrigation canals in Pakistan which on 15th August, 1947 were dependent on water supplies from the eastern rivers.

Under the aegis of the World Bank, an Indus Development Fund was set up to which a number of countries contributed funds for the replacement works as envisaged in the treaty and for connected development works. Under the treaty, India undertook to make a fixed contribution towards the cost of the replacement works in Pakistan.

On the completion of the Mangla Dam, more water will be available to Pakistan which in turn will also enable India to make additional withdrawals from the eastern rivers for her own use. The Indian Commissioner appointed under the terms of the treaty has been periodically visiting the dam site along with his Pakistani counterpart. This fact has been

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* Statement in response to a Calling Attention about the Prime Minister's message to President Ayub Khan of Pakistan congratulating him on the completion of the Mangla Dam, *L.S. Deb.*, 15 November, 1967. cc. 716-32.

mentioned in the annual reports of the Indus Commission which were placed on the Table of the House on June 16, 1962 and August 18, 1965. The Indian Commissioner is now discussing the extent of the withdrawals which India can make because of the earlier completion of the Mangla Dam and other works.

The Mangla Dam is located on the international border between the Indian territory of the Jammu and Kashmir State in the occupation of Pakistan and that of West Pakistan. Our protests which relate to a period prior to the conclusion of the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 were intended to safeguard our sovereign rights over the territory involved. The treaty itself safeguards these rights under article XI(I) (b) as follows :

> Nothing contained in this treaty and nothing arising out of the execution thereof shall be construed as constituting a recognition or waiver (whether tacit, by implication or otherwise), of any rights or claims whatsoever of either of the parties other than those rights or claims which are expressly recognised or waived in this treaty.

On the 16th November, 1959, Prime Minister Nehru said in the Lok Sabha in reply to supplementary questions on starred question No. 2 regarding the Mangla Dam and I quote

> ...the hon. Member is correct in thinking that it (Mangla Dem) may be connected with the canal water issue. In that sense, there is no question of any dispute; the dispute is about Kashmir, if you like. The other is the question of an arrangement about canal waters, about which we are dealing with Pakistan...
>
> ...there are two parts of this matter. One is a question that arises over our territory in Kashmir State even though that might now be occupied by Pakistan, and our claim that they should not do anything on the territory which is ours. That is one question which is part of the Kashmir issue. The other question is connected with the canal waters, as to the best use that might be made of canal waters for India and for Pakistan. In that connection, the US Government and the World Bank, and perhaps various other governments, are, at the instance of the World Bank, offering considerable sums of money to Pakistan. That is not our concern—what money they offer to Pakistan in connection with the development of their canal system.

The position of the Government of India was reiterated in this House, in answer to questions, on several occasions, *viz.* on 17th February, 1960 and 30th November, 1960 by Prime Minister Nehru, and on 31st August, 1961 by his Parliamentary Secretary. There has been no departure whatsoever from that position.

The construction of the Mangla Dam has aroused much international interest not only because of the financial contributions made by a number of foreign countries but also as an engineering feat. A number of Foreign dignitaries are expected to be present at the opening of the Dam. The completion of this irrigation system will now benefit millions of human beings in our neighbours country and also in our own as it will enable us to draw more water for Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan.

I should like to end by recalling that it has been our firm conviction that India and Pakistan can cooperate with each other in a meaningful way for the benefit of our respective peoples.*

*** *** ***

I have stated very clearly, our rights remain inviolable.** That is made quite clear in my statement. It also stands embodied in the Indus Waters Treaty.

I did state that there has been no change in our position. I can go on repeating it as many times as you like. As I have already explained, the protests relate to a period prior to the signing of the Indus Waters Treaty. The protests were made, as Shri Nath Pai has pointed out, in the years 1957, 1958 and 1959. When the Indus Waters Treaty was signed in 1960, the Treaty itself contained a provision safeguarding our sovereign right on the territory involved, which the protests were intended to protect. Therefore, our position in regard to the Kashmir question is in no way compromised. It is fully safeguarded, as I have said already two or three times, by article XI (I) (*b*) of the Indus Waters Treaty. I do not think we are now discussing the merits or demerits of the Indus waters Treaty, Which has been discussed in this House on many an occasion. Here I should like to read out what Shastriji stated on that occasion when this subject was discussed here. He said :

> "Under that situation, we should not do any such things which may put us in a wrong or false position or it may be said that we are not even supplying water to them. Pakistan may say that India is not supplying water to them, then what is wrong with them if they demand Kashmir?†

We have to view this question in the wider context. I can understand emotions being aroused and I can also sympathize with them. As the House knows, I have been very closely connected with the independence struggle of Kashmir from an early date.

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Pakistan has occupied certain areas of Indian territory. We have made clear what we feel about this and also our intention of taking back Indian territory. In this position, there is no change. The building of the Mangla Dam does not change this in any way....

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It has not changed.*** On the contary, it has been accepted on thc Indus Waters Treaty, as I read out here. This does not, in any way constitute a recognition of a waiver of our

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* In response to a Calling Attention on the same subject in Rajya Sabha, the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi made an identical Statement there also and thereafter answered the questions asked by members. (*R.S. Deb.*, 23 November, 1967, cc. 822-38)

** Replying to Shri Nath Pai who *inter-alia* remarked : "So far as effort is concerned to improve relations I think we will all agree, but we do not want anybody's friendship at the cost of India's territorial sovereignty...."

† Translated from Hindi.

*** Responding to a Member's remark. "It has changed now."

rights or claims. Therefore, this position is very clear and unambiguous. (*Interruption*). In our eyes that territory remains Indian territory. As I said, what is involved here is the much wider question as to how we deal with these matters, whether it is a question only of talking about it or whether something else can be done about it....

*** *** ***

From the beginning, it is a question of how one deals with another nation or another person. It does not mean giving up one's rights or, in any way, weakening one's case. Surely, nobody can think Gandhiji was weak on any issue. When it came to a question of making payments to Pakistan in the middle of a conflict, he insisted that we should pay our share. Similarly, during the last conflict, Shastriji approved of the payment of our instalment. So, what I am saying is that nothing new has happened. We have had a particular outlook. We are determined not to say anything which might prejudice our national interest in any way. On this, we all stand solid. But on the other hand, we must not say anything that provides grist to the mill of Pakistani propaganda....

Plight of Indians in the Indian Enclaves in East Pakistan*

Mr. Chairman, there are 123 Indian enclaves in East Pakistan with an area of some 29.4 square miles against 74 Pakistani enclaves with an area of about 18.4 square miles in West Bengal. Under the Nehru-Noon Agreement of 1958, these enclaves are to be exchanged. The Constitution Amendment Act of 1960 and Acquired Territories Merger Act of 1960 provided for the exchange of the enclaves after demarcation. But no exchange has so far taken place owing to Pakistan's insistence that demarcation on the East Pakistan/ West Bengal border should take place simultaneously with the demarcation of Berubari, which is itself pending the result of a petition before get the Calcutta High Court whose judgement is awaited.

Subsequent to the Indo-Pak conflict of 1965, the Government of India have suggested to the Pakistan Government, the reciprocal grant of facilities for the sending of police parties to these enclaves. A reply from the Pakistan Government is awaited.

According to a report of the Government of West Bengal in August 1967, the condition of our nationals in the Indian enclaves is insecure owing to the activities of certain Pakistani elements in the areas surrounding the enclaves.

The Government of India are continuing their efforts to persuade the Pakistan Government to agree to the sending of police parties to the enclaves on a reciprocal basis.

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Sir, the hon. Member** is perfectly correct in saying that we have not been able to give adequate protection to these areas, and that is why we are pursuing our efforts to come to some agreement about them. As a reciprocal measure we are not allowing the Pakistan Government to replace their policemen who are stationed in their enclaves.

As far as the rehabilitation of refugees, is concerned, we take a very sympathetic view and are considering the help that can be given. This matter is under the consideration of our Ministry of Rehabilitation.

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* Replying to the Calling Attention regarding "Distress of the Indian Citizens in Indian Enclaves within the territory of East Pakistan", *R.S. Deb.*, 28 November, 1967, cc. 1501-04.

** Shri Chitta Basu.

As I said, no agreement was reached on any of these matters, and now one of the reasons which are holding up the sending of our police party is that the present West Bengal Government had wished to change the positioning of our party—First our police station was in another place, in Kota, Bajni. Shri Ajoy Mukerjee's Government wished to change it to Salabari because from there it could be easier to keep in touch with them and it would be easier for the police party to function from there, but the Pakistan Government has not yet replied. We are awaiting a reply from them and we are pursuing the matter.

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Sir, I am not sure whether they were able to come to vote or not but the whole question of the exchange of these people is held up because of the Berubari case.* so far as the voting is concerned, I can find out and let the hon. Member know about it.

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Government is taking every step possible to help in improving conditions there. We do take reciprocal steps, and they have been, as I had spoken earlier, about the police party and so on. The last question that was asked by another hon. Member was with regard to the Cooch Behar Refugees Association. We have had some reports that they submitted a memorandum to the West Bengal Government making various requests. But we are still awaiting the comments of the West Bengal Government .

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* Replying to Shri Chitta Basu's question: "What arrangements were made by the Government of India to ensure facilities for the Indian voters living in Indian enclaves within the Pakistan Territory to cast their vote and thereby exercise their franchise..."

India, Pakistan and West Germany*

Sir, some time ago, several Pakistani newspapers carried reports alleging that a West German spokesman in Islamabad had said that West Germany supported the principle of self-determination in Kashmir. The Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi also issued a press release on November 28, 1967 and I quote:

> Rawalpindi, November 28: A West German spokesman said here last evening that West Germany favoured the settlement of the Kashmir dispute on the principle of justice and on the basis of self-determination.

We naturally made enquiries from our High Commission in Islamabad and from the Embassay of the Federal Republic of Germany in New Delhi about the truthfulness of these reports.

Our High Commission in Islamabad has informed us that the statement in the Pakistan High Commission's press release was based neither on the joint communique issued at the conclusion of Chancellor Kiesinger's visit to Pakistan nor on the statement of any West German Spokesman in Islamabad. The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in New Delhi has categorically affirmed that the reported statement was not made by any member of the West German delegation.

We have examined the joint communique issued summarising the results of the talks between Chancellor Kiesinger and President Ayub Khan in Islamabad. The only reference to Kashmir in the joint communique appears in paragraph 6 which I shall read out. I quote:

> The President of Pakistan explained to the Chancellor the situation with regard to Indo-Pakistan relations. In this connection he expressed his Government's concern at the growing military imbalance in the Sub-continent and reaffirmed his Government's desire to seek a peaceful and honourable solution of all disputes with India, including the dispute of Jammu and Kashmir. The Chancellor took note of Pakistan's position and expressed the hope that these disputes would be peacefully resolved.

It is clear that the German Chancellor merely took note of Pakistan's position and expressed the hope that these disputes would be peacefully resolved. This is in consonance with the Tashkent Declaration.

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* Statement and reply in response to a Calling Attention on the reported flight of Chancellor Kiesinger over Pakistan occupied part of Kashmir, *R.S. Deb.*, 7 December, 1967, cc. 2958–78.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, may I now deal with another question. It is about the route followed by the aircraft carrying the German party.

We have been informed that there was a proposal for Chancellor Kiesinger to visit Gilgit. This was not accepted. Later, on the 27th November, a sight-seeing flight to *Nanga Parbat* and K-2 was planned. As the House is aware, *Nanga Parbat* was first climbed by a German expedition. Since then the Germans have been interested in this mountain. This flight was cancelled because of bad weather. On the 28th November on their way from Rawalpindi to Lahore, the West German party was flown to *Nanga Parbat* and K-2. According to our information, the West Germans were not told that they would be flying over Gilgit, Hunza or Skardu and they have assured us that the flight was solely for purposes of sight-seeing and that it had no political significance.

Hon. Members are familiar with the general behaviour pattern of the press in Pakistan. Every time an important visitor goes to that country, an attempt is made to distort his statements and actions. I doubt if the world is misled by such antics.*

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†Sir, our attention has been drawn towards the issue of these maps and we are examining the issue.** We have not received all the replies yet. We do not know whether the German Government is involved in it or not. As I said, we have enquired from them, but we have not received any reply so far.

As far as the route of their flight is concerned, I have already said in my statement that when the fact that their aeroplane was flying over Gilgit, etc. was brought to their notice, they denied it. Later on they said that they did not know that their aeroplane was flying over that territory.

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I am not at all clear about the hon. Member's*** question. He has given some very useful information. The figures may be correct about Pakistan's strength and he is also absolutely correct in saying that India has no aggressive intention and that we are only concerned with preparing ourselves to defend our country. It is, I think, the duty of the Government and the people to be fully prepared for defence. Whenever any visitors come here, we put the facts of the situation before them so that they are fully aware of our stand and also of the threat which is posed on our borders by Pakistan and China.

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* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi, in Lok Sabha also. (*L.S. Deb.*, 8 December, 1967, cc. 5734-46.)

† Translated from Hindi.

** Replying to Shri Rajnarain's remarks about the reported circulation of some maps in the West Germany in which Kashmir had been shown a separate territory, and not as integral part of India, and Sikkim and Bhutan as the Chinese territories.

*** Shri A.M. Tariq.

In these matters* we have to go by the Government's statement, and what the Government says. When Chancellor Kiesinger was here, we talked to him about all these matters and he made his position quite clear.

The other question which the hon. Member** has raised is about East Germany. As the hon. Members know, the German question is a complicated one and is mixed up with the whole question of European security. We have always tried to take the view that we should not take any action or any position which would introduce further complications in an already difficult situation. It has been our policy to develop further trade and cultural relations with East Germany and these have grown in recent years.

*** *** ***

Sir, I did not say that I shall now enquire.*** What I said to the first questioner**** was that we have already made enquiries about this matter but we have not yet received a reply. This is one part of the question. The second is—I do not think that it is right to mix up the question of the maps with that of the flight over Gilgit; these are two entirely different matters, and I do not think they should be mixed up. To our knowledge nobody has yet said that any missiles were supplied to Pakistan during the conflict. But what Shri Arjun Arora said in the last part of his question is true in this sense that some Sabre jets were supplied by West Germany to Iran and from Iran they have gone to Pakistan. Our Government had protested about this to the West Germans and they had assured us that the supply was made to Iran and that it was intended for Iran, and also that they would do everything possible to get the planes back to Iran.

*** *** ***

The first point which was made by the hon. Member***** is whether we have any knowledge that Pakistan asked for arms from West Germany. I think, as the hon. Member, Shri Bhupesh Gupta, has said, it is possible that they did ask for it. But we have no definite information. As far as we know, the Germans had said to us here that they would not send arms to any area of tension.

Now the other question was about Pakistan's response with regard to the normalisation of relations between our two countries. It is true that the relations are not satisfactory, but nevertheless a small beginning towards normalisation was made in the Telecommunications Agreement which was made recently, and I think it is in our interest to pursue this matter.

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* Relating to the reference of 'military imbalance' in the subcontinent made in the Joint Communique issued at the conclusion of talks between Chancellor Kiesinger and President Ayub Khan in Islamabad.

** Shri Bhupesh Gupta.

*** Refers to the reported circulation of some maps in West Germany.

**** Shri Rajnarain.

***** Shri Chitta Basu.

†Hon. Member* is aware of our stand. The occupation of territory by Pakistan is illegal since that territory belongs to us.

Sir, with your permission, I want to say one thing. As Shri Arjun Arora and Shri Paliwalji have asked about the map, I would like to say that when we enquired from them in this regard, they replied that the map of 1963 was not an official map, some private firm had issued it and it had nothing to do with the Government of West Germany.

*** *** ***

Sir, normally these matters are not taken up with Heads of Governments but through the concerned Embassies. That is why we took it up through our Embassies, with the High Commission in Pakistan and with the German Embassy here and they both assured us that they would look into the matter.

*** *** ***

As I said, we took it up with the High Commissioner there and also here and in Bonn. The German Embassy has taken the matter up with the Pakistan High Commissioner and we have been told that they are considering what further action they should take.

*** *** ***

I do not think the flight has in any way affected the relations between India and Pakistan. If there are not good relations, if there is tension between us, it is due entirely to other causes. What was the other question** ? Yes, I remember. I have already expressed myself on East Germany. We have friendly relations with them and we are increasing our trade and other connections with them.

*** *** ***

I have already replied to these questions. With the exception of one *i.e.* whether Chancellor Kiesinger had protested. Well, I have no knowledge about this.

*** *** ***

We are very very grateful to all those countries which supported us in our time of difficulty. The House is fully aware that East Germany did support us but I do not think it is right to say that West Germany was against us.

*** *** ***

†The hon. Member*** is right in his submission that West Germany has made some changes in their policy.

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† Translated from Hindi.

* Shri Triloki Singh.

** Of Shri Niren Ghosh.

*** Shri Godey Murahari.

The Kutch Award*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the International Tribunal to determine the border between India and Pakistan in the Gujarat-West Pakistan area, delivered its Award at Geneva yesterday. Government have not yet received this Award. My statement is therefore based on the message received from our Consulate-General in Geneva.

*** *** ***

The constitution of the Tribunal and the Award flows from the Indo-Pakistan Agreement on the Gujarat-West Pakistan border concluded on June 30, 1965. That Agreement was laid on the Table of the House by Prime Minister Shastri on August 16, 1965, along with his statement. The House discussed this statement on the Agreement and on August 18, 1965, adopted the following resolution :—

> "This House, having considered the statement laid on the Table of the House by the Prime Minister on the 16th August, 1965, on the Indo-Pakistan Agreement of June, 1965 relating to Gujarat–West Pakistan border, approve of it."

It is not necessary to take the time of the House to recapitulate the Agreement which now forms part of the records of the House.

*** *** ***

In accordance with the terms of the Agreement, India nominated Ambassador, Ales Bebler, Judge of the Constitutional Court of Yugoslavia, Pakistan nominated Ambassador Nasrollah Entzam of Iran and the Secretary-General of the United Nations appointed Judge Gunnar Lagergren of the Stockholm Court of Appeals, Sweden.

I should like to recall what was stated in this House by Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri explaining the function of the Tribunal, and I quote :—

> I would like to state what is to be determined by negotiations or by the verdict of the Tribunal is not of any new boundary between India and Pakistan. That is not the claim of either of the two countries. What is to be determined is the boundary which came into being as a result of the partition of the country and the accession of the State of Kutch of India....

Thus, the Award of the Tribunal was intended to settle the boundary between the former State of Kutch and the Province of Sind as it existed at the time of Partition.

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* Statement regarding the 'Kutch Award', *L.S. Deb.*, 20 February, 1968, cc. 2154-56.

The preparation and presentation of India's case was entrusted to a team of eminent Counsel. The Attorney-General of India, Shri C.K. Daphtary was the leading Counsel, the others being Shri N. C. Chatterji, M.P., and Shri N.A. Palkhiwala, Senior Advocates of the Supreme Court, and Shri J.M. Thakhore, Advocate-General of Gujarat. The Counsel had the assistance of a team of officers headed by Shri B.N. Lokur, Law Secretary to the Government of India. Hundreds of files, maps, books and reports were examined by our team which spared no effort in preparing and presenting our case before the Tribunal, which it did with great ability and thoroughness.

The claim of Pakistan was that the boundary lay roughly along the 24th parallel; in other words, Pakistan laid claim to half the Great Rann of Kutch, with an area of some 3500 sq. miles. We had contended that the entire Rann was a part of India and the boundary lay roughly along the northern edge of the Rann. The Tribunal has unanimously rejected the Pakistani claim that the border lies along the 24th parallel. One member of the Tribunal has upheld our claim, while the other two members have upheld it with modifications in some sectors of the boundary. By a majority, the Tribunal has held that about 3200 sq. miles lies on our side of the boundary while about 300 sq. miles of the territory claimed by Pakistan lies on the Pakistan side of the boundary.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am conscious of the anxiety of the hon. Members and, indeed, of the country as a whole. I share this concern. This is a grave matter. Government are awaiting the full text which will be fully examined. Then, we shall be in a better position to make a fuller statement.... (*Interruptions*).*

* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi in Rajya Sabha also, (*R.S. Deb.*, 20 February, 1968, CC. 1249—51).

Indo-Pak Relations : Settlement of Boundary Disputes*

Government have seen newspaper reports of the Radio Pakistan broadcast on 8th March 1968 to the effect that India was in illegal possession of what it called a "sizable chunk" of Pakistani territory near Rangpur District in the Chilahati Sector.

Presumably, the reference is to an area of about 512 acres in Chilahati village. The position about this area was explained in the House by the then Prime Minister on 29th November 1963. It was pointed out on that occasion, and I quote :—

> The West Bengal Government had themselves intimated to us in 957 that 512 acres of Chilahati village of Debiganj Thana were adversely held territory.

In the same statement, it was also pointed out that, I quote again :—

> This question of the status of the Chilahati village and of the area of 512 acres of this village adversely held by West Bengal Government since the Partition, has no connection with the Indo-Pakistan Agreement on the boundary dispute concerning Berubari. The demarcation, so far as Chilahati area is concerned, follows the Radcliffe Award, which states that the international boundary in this region 'shall then continue along the Northern corner of the Thana Debiganj'.

The boundary in this region has not yet been demarcated and the area has been in our possession.

In 1964, some residents of Berubari and the adjacent areas of Chilahatt, filed a petition in the Calcutta High Court contending that the area in question was not the North-east corner of Debiganj Thana, but was really a part of Jalpaiguri Thana and was thus a part of India. The Calcutta High Court rejected this contention. On appeal, the High Court Judgement was upheld by the Supreme Court in August 1965.

The Directors of Land Records and Surveys of West Bengal and East Pakistan had agreed to undertake demarcation in the Chilahati area. The work was expected to commence in November last year but no progress could be made since the East Pakistani representative unilaterally withdrew his field staff. There has been no further progress in the matter since.

*** *** ***

* Replying to a Calling Attention regarding the reported Pakistani claim to territory on Rangpur-Cooch Behar Border, *L.S. Deb.*, 18 March, 1968, cc. 1120-27.

No step has been taken so far*. Although there are some places, such as area near Mizo hills, which cannot be demarcated owing to some specific reasons, there had been some talks in this regard....

*** *** ***

One point he** raised was about this being in the court. It is the Berubari question that is in the court and not the Chilahati question. Chilahati comes within the Radcliffe Award.

*** *** ***

Newspaper reports of unusual concentrations of Pakistani forces have not been corroborated by our own reports. I am told that whenever tension arises, the area Commanders of the two sides meet and talk the matter over and also take action under the ground rules to bring down tension.

*** *** ***

Sir, this Calling Attention relates to a very limited question regarding Chilahati. It has nothing to do with the other questions which the hon. Member*** has mentioned. He has also tried to mislead the House by saying that this is a new issue. This is not a new issue.

*** *** ***

I am not at all averse to meeting President Ayub Khan and discussing matters with him. In each matter we have to see what useful results will come about. If the proper atmosphere exists we will certainly do whatever is necessary.

*** *** ***

Sir, it will be a long statement if I were to give all these areas which are in adverse possession either of Pakistan or of India****. I am told that a list of the areas which are in the adverse possession of Pakistan was supplied to the House in answer to Starred Question No. 1484 on 31st July, 1967. If necessary, the hon. Members could look it up.

*** *** ***

We have laid claim to some of those areas which we think are ours. Some hon. Members have referred to areas like Nagarparkar which are not ours. Obviously we cannot lay any claim to them.

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* Replying to Shri K.N. Tiwari's questions, "I would like to know as to why the demarcation work on our borders with Pakistan has not yet been completed? Secondly, since that area is under dispute and in spite of India's readiness to take up demarcation work there, Pakistan has shown its unwillingness and does not want to demarcate it; and has ultimately dropped this idea; therefore, what steps Government of India have taken towards settling the issues?"

** Shri B.K. Daschowdhury.

*** Shri S.M. Banerjee.

**** Replying to the issue raised by Shri Bal Raj Madhok.

With regard to Sheikh Abdullah's statement, I have only seen what has appeared in the newspapers. He has made some statements which are unfortunate to say the least. But I do not think that we should get provoked by them. If Pakistan is going to behave as it behaved in 1965, I can assure this hon. House that we will meet it in a much stronger way. (*Interruptions*). The question raised here is a limited question. It was raised earlier also in 1963 and at that time we had accepted the position—both the Central Government and the West Bengal Government—that these 512 acres with which we are concerned just now is an adversely held territory.

Relief to Cyclone Victims in East Pakistan*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the other day I made an announcement in the House regarding the Government of India's contribution of Rs. 5 lakhs for relief to the victims of the terrible cyclone in East Pakistan. I had then said that this was an initial and token contribution. The press reports indicate that the magnitude of the calamity and the extend of damage is much greater than was originally thought.

As an expression of friendship and concern for the people of East Pakistan in their hour of distress, the Government of India have decided to raise the quantum of relief assistance to Rs. 1 crore. This amount will be utilised broadly for the supply of rice and sugar and essential commodities such as medicines, baby food, clothing and coal. The Government have also decided to send two mobile 50-bed hospitals fitted with X-ray and other facilities. We shall also make available the services of river craft with the requisite strength of crew for operations.

* Statement regarding Government contribution for relief of East Pakistan Cyclone victims, *L.S. Deb.*, 19 November, 1970, c. 434.

Facing the Challenges : Situation on Indo-Pak Border, 1971*

The House is aware of the announcement made by President Yahya Khan yesterday declaring a State of Emergency throughout Pakistan. This declaration is the climax of his efforts to divert the attention of the world from Bangladesh and to put the blame on us for a situation which he himself has created. Such a declaration by a military regime, which has been waging war on the people of Bangladesh for the last 8 months and has been threatening us with total war for the last 3 to 4 months, has no meaning except to deceive his own people and the world at large.

President Yahya Khan's Id message had created the impression that he was at last heeding the advice of a number of world leaders to abandon the military approach and to seek a political solution. We hope that the declaration of Emergency is not a device to get out of the compulsions of seeking a political solution.

Since the recession of the monsoon, the successes of the *Mukti Bahini* have apparently upset the plan of the military regime. The liberation forces of Bangladesh, with the full support of their entire people, have taken a heavy toll of Pakistan's armed forces and have freed large parts of their homeland.

At great cost of ourselves, we have been shouldering an intolerable burden of looking after nearly 10 million terror-stricken men, women and children, who have fled from Pakistani oppression. The refugees want to return to their homes under credible guarantees of safety and human dignity. We are determined to ensure that they are enabled to do so as soon as possible.

Pakistan's armed forces have been shelling our border areas inflicting damage on life and property. Their air force has violated our air space several times and once came right up to Srinagar. Spies and saboteurs have been blowing up trains and bridges. Since March 1971, we have lodged 66 protests for border violations covering 890 incidents. For air violations we have lodged 17 protest covering 50 incidents. However, these protests have had no effect and to cover up their incessant violations, Pakistani propaganda media have been putting out the story that we are engaged in an undeclared war and have mounted massive attacks with tanks and troops. This is wholly untrue. In fact, it was Pakistan which threatened total war and moved its entire armed strength into operational positions on our

* Statement regarding the 'Declaration of Emergency in Pakistan and Situation on India-Pakistan Border', *L.S. Deb.*, 24 November, 1971, cc. 222–24.

borders and launched a massive hate-India campaign with the slogans "Crush India", "Conquer India". We had, therefore, to take appropriate measures and move our forces to defensive positions in order to protect the integrity of our country and the lives and properties of our citizens. It has never been our intention to escalate the situation or to start a conflict. To this end, we have instructed our troops not to cross the borders except in self-defence. We cannot ignore our experiences of 1947-48, January 1965 and of August-September 1965.

On November 21, Pakistani infantry, supported by tanks and artillery launched an offensive on the *Mukti Bahini* who were holding the liberated area around Boyra, five miles from our eastern border. Pakistani armour, under heavy artillery cover, advanced to our border threatening our defensive positions. Their shells fell in our territory, wounding a number of our men. The local Indian military Commander took appropriate action to repulse the Pakistani attack. In this action 13 Pakistani Chafee tanks were destroyed.

On November 22, the Pakistani forces called up an air strike of four Sabre jets on our positions. These were intercepted within Indian territory by our Gnats who destroyed three Sabre jets. Two of the Pakistani pilots, who baled out, were captured on our territory. We regard this as a purely local action.

Even though Pakistan has declared an Emergency, we shall refrain from taking a similar step, unless further aggressive action by Pakistan compels us to do so in the interest of national security. In the meantime, the country should remain unruffled. Our brave armed forces and our people will ensure that any adventurism on the part of the Military regime of Pakistan meets with adequate rebuff. The rulers of Pakistan must realise that the path of peace, of peaceful negotiation and reconciliation—is more rewarding than that of war and the suppression of liberty and democracy.*

* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi in Rajya Sabha also. *(R.S. Deb.*, 24 November 1971, cc. 252–55.)

Defending India's Sovereignty and Integrity*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this morning, according to the news, the Government of West Pakistan have declared war upon us. Last evening the West Pakistan Air Force violated our air space wantonly and attacked a large number of our air fields. Simultaneously their ground forces shelled our positions along the western border. Their propaganda media has made a totally baseless allegation that India had launched an attack and assault.

The news reached me just as I was leaving Calcutta. Immediately on my return I took counsel with my colleagues and with the Leaders of the Opposition Parties. We were all of one mind, united in our resolve that the nation's freedom should be defended and unanimous that the aggressor should be beaten back. I am sure the same sense of solidarity will mark our work in the difficult days ahead. A state of Emergency has been proclaimed.

I lay on the Table a copy of Notification No. G.S.R. 1789 published in Gazette of India dated the 3rd December, 1971 under sub-clause (b) of clause (2) of article 352 of the Constitution, publishing the Proclamation of Emergency issued by the President on the 3rd December, 1971 under clause (1) of the said article.

We are approaching the House to adopt the Defence of India Bill.

Our feeling is one of regret that Pakistan did not desist from the ultimate folly and sorrow that at a time when the greatest need of this sub-continent is development, the peoples of India and Pakistan have been pushed into war. We could have lived as good neighbours by the people of West Pakistan have never had a say in their destiny. In this grave hour our own dominant emotion is one of confidence and faith.

For over nine months, the military regime of West Pakistan has barbarously trampled upon freedom and basic human rights in Bangladesh. The Army of occupation has committed heinous crimes unmatched for their vindictive ferocity. Many millions have been uprooted, ten millions have been pushed into our country.

We repeatedly drew the attention of the world to this annihilation of a whole people, to this menace to our security. Everywhere the people showed sympathy and understanding for the economic and other burdens and the danger to India. But Governments seemed morally and politically paralysed. Belated efforts to persuade the Islamabad regime to take some step which would lead to a lasting solution fell on deaf ears.

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* Statement regarding attack by Pakistan, *L.S. Deb.*, 4 December, 1971, cc. 1-4.

The wrath of the West Pakistan Army has been aroused because the people of Bangladesh have stood and struggled for values which the Army is unable to comprehend and which it has suppressed in every province of Pakistan.

As the *Mukti Bahini's* effectiveness increased the West Pakistan Army became more desperate. Our tradition is to stand not with tyrants, but with the oppressed and so the anger has been turned upon us.

West Pakistan has escalated and enlarged the aggression against Bangladesh into full war against India. War needs as much patience and self-restraint as does peace. Military regime of West Pakistan will go all out to sow suspicion and rumour in the hope of fomenting communal tension and internal trouble. Let us not be taken in by their designs. We must maintain unity and a sense of high purpose.

We should be prepared for a long struggle. High production, agricultural and industrial, is the foundation upon which defence rests. The courage and fighting capability of the *Jawans* have to be backed by the dedication of the farmer, the worker, the technician and the trader. The business community has a special responsibility to resist the temptation to hoard or to charge higher profit. Artists and writers, teachers and students—the nation looks to them to defend our ideals and to keep our high morale. To the women of our country I make special appeal to save every possible grain and rupee and to avoid waste. The sacrifice of each of us will build the nation's strength and enduring power.

We have stood for peace, but peace itself has to be defended. Today we are fighting to safeguard our territorial integrity and national honour. Above all, we are fighting for the ideals we cherish and the cause of peace.

Defence of India*

Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for special measures to ensure the public safety and interest, the defence of India and civil defence and for the trial of certain offences and for matters connected therewith.**

*** *** ***

I introduce the Bill.

I beg to move :

That the Bill to provide for special measures to ensure the public safety and interest, the defence of India and civil defence and for the trial of certain offences and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration.

Mr. Speaker, I have said a little while ago*** that we shall be bringing before this House the Defence of India Bill. This Bill seeks only to provide necessary legal sanction as a consequence of the proclamation of emergency made by the President. We have tried to interfere as little as possible with the normal avocations of our citizens. But the country as a whole will have to make great efforts and undergo all sacrifices necessary for our defence.

The provisions of the Bill are somewhat similar to legislation undertaken on the last occasion. However, some changes in the light of our earlier experience and judicial decisions have been made. Full advantage has been taken of the laws enacted in the recent years by Parliament. Thus, the Bill does not make any separate provisions for detention. The Maintenance of Internal Security Act has been utilised with some modifications. In order that prompt action may be taken against activities prejudicial to the defence effort, District Magistrates and other specified officers are proposed to be given the power to detain such persons. The maximum period for which a person could be detained in the interest of defence of India or security of India without consulting the Advisory Board has been extended to two years. These provisions, however, will be in force only so long as the Proclamation made by the President under Article 352 is in force.

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* While introducing and moving for consideration the Defence of India Bill 1971, *L.S. Deb.*, 4 December, 1971, cc. 37-39.

** The motion was adopted.

*** During her statement regarding 'attack by Pakistan' made in the House the same day.

So far as the modifications in other laws go, our objective has only been to provide more deterrent punishment for offences which in the context our defence efforts would be regarded as serious.

Now, I move that the Defence of India Bill, 1971, be taken into consideration.

Surrender of Pakistani Forces in Bangladesh*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have an announcement to make, which I think the House has been waiting for, for sometime. The West Pakistan forces have unconditionally surrendered in Bangladesh. The instrument of surrender was signed in Dacca at 16.31 hours I.S.T. today by Lt. Gen. A.A.K. Niazi on behalf of the Pakistan Eastern Command, Lt. Gen. Jagjit Singh Aurora, GOC-in-C of the Indian and Bangladesh forces in the Eastern Theatre accepted the surrender. Dacca is now the free capital of a free country.

This House and the entire nation rejoice in this historic event. We hail the people of Bangla Desh in their hour of triumph. We hail the brave young man and boys of the *Mukti Bahini* for their valour and dedication. We are proud of our own Army, Navy, Air Force and the Border Security Force, who have so magnificently demonstrated their quality and capacity. Their discipline and devotion to duty are well known. India will remember with gratitude the sacrifices of those who have laid down their lives, and our thoughts are with their families.

Our Armed Forces are under strict orders to treat Pakistani prisoners of war in accordance with the Geneva Convention and to deal with all sections of the population of Bangladesh in a humane manner. The Commanders of the *Mukti Bahini* have issued similar orders to their forces. Although the Government of Bangladesh have not yet been given an opportunity to sign the Geneva Convention, they also have declared that they will fully abide by it. It will be the responsibility of the Government of Bangladesh, the *Mukti Bahini* and the Indian Armed Forces to prevent any reprisals.

Our objectives were limited—to assist the gallant people of Bangladesh and their *Mukti Bahini* to liberate their country from a reign of terror and to resist aggression on our own land. Indian Armed Forces will not remain in Bangladesh any longer than is necessary.

The millions who were driven out of their homes across our borders have already begun trekking back. The rehabilitation of this war-torn land calls for dedicated team work by its Government and people.

We hope and trust that the Father of this new nation. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, will take his rightful place among his own people and lead Bangladesh to peace, progress and

* Statement regarding the unconditional surrender of West-Pakistan Forces in Bangladesh, *L.S., Deb.*, 16 December, 1971, cc. 145-46.

prosperity. The time has come when they can together look forward to a meaningful future in their *Shonar Bangla*. They have our good wishes.

The triumph is not theirs alone. All nations who value the human spirit, will recognise it as a significant milestone in man's quest for liberty.

Indo–Pak War, 1971 : Declaration of Ceasefire by India*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, on March 31, 1971, six days after the great upheaval in Bangladesh. I had the honour to move a Resolution in this House.

I said, then, that India's permanent interest in peace and our commitment to uphold and defend human rights demanded the immediate cessation of the use of force and of the massacre of defenceless people of Bangladesh. I had called upon all peoples and Governments to take urgent and constructive steps to prevail upon the Government of Pakistan to immediately end the systematic decimation of a people. I had concluded my statement by expressing the profound conviction of this House that the historic upsurge of the 75 million people of East Bengal would triumph. We also gave an assurance that their struggle and sacrifice would receive the whole-hearted sympathy and support of the people of India. Today, the pledge we then made together in this House and in the country stands redeemed.

It is natural that the people of India should be elated. We can also understand the great rejoicing of the people of Bangladesh. I share the elation and the joy. But, as the Gita says, neither joy nor sorrow should tilt the balance of our equanimity or blur our vision of the future.

All those who have borne arms, all those who have been involved in the planning and direction of the operations, all the people of India who have responded so generously– these are to be thanked and congratulated.

It is a victory, but a victory not only of arms, but of ideas. The *Mukti Bahini* could not have fought so daringly but for its passionate urge for freedom and the establishment of a special identity of Bangladesh. Our own forces would not have been so fearless and relentless had they not been convinced of our cause.

India has always stood for breadth of vision, tolerance of the points of view of others; of being in the battle yet above it.

We stand for Democracy, for Secularism and for Socialism. Only this combination opens the way for full freedom, gives protection to the weaker sections and provides opportunity for the growth of different personalities.

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* Statement regarding 'India's decision to cease operations on 17 December, 1971 on all fronts in the Western Sector.' *L.S. Deb.*, 17 December, 1971, cc. 69-72.

We believe that no nation can be built on concepts which are negative or which do not have meaning for all its people. Unfortunately, Pakistan has based its policies on hatred for, and confrontation with India.

While we re-dedicate ourselves to our ideals, I hope the people of Pakistan will seek a path which is more in keeping with their circumstances and needs. These 24 years, we have heard many aggressive speeches and much abusive and false propaganda against us. We cannot believe that this is the true voice of the Pakistani people. They have been kept in darkness by their successive regimes. We want to assure them that we have no enmity towards them. There are more things in common between us than those which divide us.

We should like to fashion our relations with the people of Pakistan on the basis of friendship and understanding. Let them live as masters in their own house and devote their energies to the removal of poverty and inequalities in their country.

It is this sincere desire which prompted us last evening to instruct our Army, Navy and Air Force to cease operations from 20.00 hours today on all fronts in the west.

I am grateful for the support which all political parties of the country have given during this difficult period and specially to this initiative on behalf of peace.

This offer was communicated to the world community by our Minister of External Affairs, Sardar Swaran Singh in New York. We also had it formally conveyed to the Government of Pakistan through the Swiss Embassy. We hope that the people and the rulers of Pakistan will appreciate and reciprocate this offer.

The consequences which would flow from a failure to do so will rest squarely upon the military rulers of Pakistan. However, regardless of what happens on the western front, let us not be complacent. The coming months specially will bring new and complex problems. We must be very vigilant to safeguard our integrity and our interests and above all, the fundamental beliefs of our national existence.*

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* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi, in Rajya Sabha also. (*R.S. Deb.*, 17 December, 1971, cc. 78–80.)

Indo-Pak Relations*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is hardly any need for me to intervene in this debate because I find that from our own side and from Members of the Opposition there has come solid support for this Agreement. And the only arguments, if one can call them arguments, which were put forward by the Jana Sangh have been very ably refuted by Members from all sides of the House.

This morning, we witnessed what I can only call an utterly deplorable and ridiculous demonstration on the floor of the House. I do not think that any Member of the House, no matter on which side or which policy he stands for, will say that such doings have anything whatsoever to do with democratic functioning and that is why it is astonishing that the same Members had the cheek to talk of democracy in this House today. One could have called such action childish. But it would be an insult to the children of India to call it so.

I must repudiate very strongly—I do not think there is any need to do so but these things must go on record–the constant allegation that the Government of India is acting at the behest of some outside power. I think—I am sorry for these people—I can only say that they must be suffering from some deep inferiority complex. They must be suffering from an utter lack of confidence in the people of India. (*Interruptions*) I am not going to yield. I am capable of taking care of myself.....(*Interruptions*) I am not yielding to this gentleman at all. They have made enough demonstration of their behaviour, their sagacity and their experience as they call it, this morning. The House has had enough of it. I hope, Sir, you will not in future permit such behaviour on the floor of the House. When foreigners have visited this House and when I have gone abroad it is sad to hear comments on this sort of behaviour taking place inside the House. This is no compliment to Indian democracy or to Indian unity.

Mr. Vajpayee spoke also of Indian unity. I know something about the unity of this country and the unity of the people. Let me repeat that I have said before, that unity is for a purpose. You do not have unity just for the sake of unity. You have unity to make the country strong; you have unity to take the country forward. You do not have unity to take the country down, to show meanness, to show pettiness and to show lack of statesmanship.

Today Mr. Vajpayee was right in saying that he had some lakh of people with him. He does have. But let me remind him that the population of India is 60 crores, and those crores are not with Mr. Vajpayee. He may have a few lakhs but there are still the crores of people.

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* Participating in the discussion on a Motion regarding the Simla Agreement, *L.S. Deb.*, 31 July, 1972, cc. 304-14.

Are we going to listen to the voice of the crores or are we going to listen to the voice of the small, whining minority ? It is not a minority that speakes up with strength; it is a whining, weak, full of inferiority minority. He has not only no confidence in the people of India, he has shown utter disregard for the people of Kashmir. How dare he says that we are leaving the people of Kashmir to the tender mercies of the Pakistanis ? Do not blame the people of Kashmir who have stood by us in all times turmoil. At a time when there was no Indian military to help the people of Kashmir, it was their own militia who met the Pakistani attack. (*Interruptions*).

How dare he challenge their bravery ? How dare he challenge their solidarity with India.

This country, and this Government, is keenly aware of where it is going and where it wants to go. There was a time—not very ago; only last year when the same hon. Members did not believe me when I said that we knew what was going to happen in Bangladesh, that we were going to solve the problem, that we were going to see that the refugees were returned with honour and safety. Mr. Vajpayee said to me, 'I do not believe you'. I said, 'Mr. Vajpayee. I am not concerned with whether you believe me or not; I am concerned with what is going to happen.' And today it is not I who am saying what happened. Can Mr.. Vajpayee deny that there is Bangladesh today ? Can Mr. Vajpayee deny that the refugees have gone back to Bangladesh ? And still he says, 'I do not believe you.' Let him not believe me; it matters little to the people of India whether he believes or does not believe; it matters little to the people of the world whether he believes or does not believe. But history will show whether what has happened has been for the good of India.

I have made no tall claims for the Simla Agreement; I make no tall claims now. All I say is that it is a beginning; it is a small beginning perhaps, but it is a good beginning. Why do I say so ? I am not concerned with whether we can trust the President of Pakistan or not; I am only concerned with whether we can trust ourselves or not. Do we trust ourselves or not ? Have we confidence in our strength or not ? Have we the strength to handle the situation or not? This is what concerns me. Are we afraid ? May be, the Jan Sangh is afraid of Pakistan.

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Why do you shout like this if you are not ?* (*Interruptions*) It is not of use saying anything now. (*Interruptions*).

I appeal to the members of the Party, I am not like the leaders on the other side; I am fully able to defend myself; I do not need support from other. Every time when Mr. Vajpayee got up, eight of his members felt it necessary to support him. But this is not necessary on our side of the House.

Now we have a certain national pride. And when I use the word 'pride', I do not mean false pride, I do not mean any feeling of arrogance, but pride in this nation and what it has stood for, pride in the Indian people and what they are capable of doing pride which

* Replying to Shri Hukam Chand Kachwai who intervened to say, "No".

makes you want to do your best, to give your utmost, no matter what it costs, for the good of the country. Perhaps it is a sentiment that cannot be understood by some of our friends opposite. We cannot blame them. They are, no less than Pakistan creatures of partition. They had no place in India before, and perhaps they fear that they will have no place when there is complete peace. That is why they are so concerned that the spirit of confrontation should continue.

What is the basic issue before us? May I take the House into confidence? No, I must digress a moment—we have been blamed by all sides for not consulting the opposition. Now, we held a meeting of the leaders of the opposition on the 19th of May where we told them whatever it was possible to say before the Simla talks actually took place. We put our points before them. Our friends from the CPM refused to attend the meeting, but we cannot be blamed for that. The others, including the Jan Sangh, were present. There was nothing more we could have said had we met even one day before the talks. Therefore, it is not true to say that we did not put our views before them. Naturally, we could not know the details. We did not know the details ourselves. We did not know how things would proceed.

The very first remark I made to Mr. Bhutto was that we have to decide, Pakistan and India have to decide, whether the interests of these two countries are complementary or are they now or are they always going to be conflicting? This is a major issue to decide. If we think that our interests conflict, then you can have one agreement or a hundred agreements and you will not have peace. But if we believe as India has believed and India does believe today, that our interests are largely the same, that the major problems we face are the problems of the poverty of our peoples of the economic backwardness of our countries and the incessant, effort of foreign powers to pressuries us. We all know and most of us have been involved in the freedom struggle what deliberate attempt there was to create friction within ourselves. Why ? So as to weaken the freedom struggle. They knew that if all the religions and all the communities kept together, then their unity would create a strength what nobody could move, not even the great British Empire. But they knew also that if they could divide us on any issue, whether it is language or religion or anything else, well, then they would have a chance of defeating us. That is why their effort was to create dissensions.

After Partition, they could not do it in the same manner. Therefore, the attempt of those forces who were interested in keeping the sub-continent weak, was to see that this confrontation should continue between the different parts of the sub-continent so that we would be more involved in this sort of quarrel than in tackling our basic problems and trying to become strong in ourselves.

This is what we have to study. When this is the state of affairs, do we permit it, or should we say, "Enough, we have had enough of the traps of others. Today we must realise what is in our real interests." There is no doubt that the real interests of this country, as of Pakistan, lie in peace between the two countries.

Will there be peace or not? I am neither an astrologer nor do I consult astrologers. I do not know. All I know is that I must fight for peace and I must take those steps which

will lead us to peace. If they do not work out, we are prepared. It is not as if we are disregarding the interests of the nation. We are not saying. No, No. We thought there would be peace. Even if somebody attacks us, we are not ready.' That is not our attitude. We are prepared to face any threat or any kind of aggression should it take place. But we must all consider, as our friend, hon. Member Shri Anthony has said, whether this is really within the realm of possibility or whether it is a remote consideration.

In a situation like this, when we obviously have the upper hand, we are in a position to guide affairs. Had we stood up saying as when two children are quarreling, 'You have taken my toy; I must have it before I speak to you' or something like that, if we had that kind of attitude what would have happened?

It may be that the talks would have broken down. We could have said, 'Mr. Bhutto, go back and we shall meet again.' And the same would happen next time. We could keep on meeting and have very pleasant meetings or perhaps not so pleasant. What would have been achieved ? Would India have been stronger ? Would we have been able to relax more than what we can today for instance ? We would not. As some historian has said, had the countries of Europe treated Germany with the understanding that India has shown to Pakistan, there would not have been a Hitler and there would not have been a Second World War'.

So, it is question of the manner of dealing with things. A situation has been created whereby it is,—I am not saying impossible, but difficult for Pakistan to do very much against us. It is for us, by our action, by our behaviour, to see that this situation is maintained. This is not done by taking up a hard attitude or soft attitude but by assuming a situation whereby the capacity for Pakistan or any other country acting against us is minimised.

Several Members have pointed out that the situation has changed in Pakistan. I think the leadership of Pakistan and President Bhutto of Pakistan are fully aware of the changes. We in India are fully aware that the situation has changed in India also. It is not the situation which pertained at the time of Tashkent; it is not the situation which pertained at the time of previous agreements; it is a different situation. Today we have the whole Indian public, and, in spite of the Jana Sangh, it is a united public, it is united on the main issues, it is united in guarding its interests. I do not think it is feasible for anybody to go against the interests of the people.

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I do not need Shri Kachwai's advice on what I should do nor do the people want his advice.*

As I said, we are not afraid of Pakistan; we are not afraid of any other people either. But,we do realise that the danger is not so much from Pakistan as it is from those forces who envisage confrontation on this Sub-continent, or confrontation in Asia, to be in their interest. As I have said on a previous occasion, Asia is a continent which has given great

* Responding to Shri Hukam Chand Kachwai's observation, "Meet the people, then it will be known to you".

richness to the world. It is to the exploitation of Africa and Asia that today the affluent countries owe their wealth and their riches and their industrial advance.

But we remain where we are. Why ? Because, we are caught up in past thinking. Somebody provokes us and we get provoked into saying; All right, let us fight amongst ourselves. We do not see that third parties are taking advantage of us.

The time has come when Asia must wake up to its destiny, must wake up to the real needs of its people, must stop fighting amongst ourselves, no matter what our previous quarrels, no matter what the previous hatred and the bitterness. The time has come today when we must bury the past. We should see in what way we can make the people of Asia, who were rich not only in wealth, not only in talent, but in culture, in heritage, once more region—I won't say, past glory, because I don't believe in that kind of glory but certainly a status in the world, where they can guide the destinies of the world, they can also mould the future in order to make the world a fit place for man to live in.

This is the vision of the future which must guide us today. If we get entangled in petty quarrels then we have to say goodbye to such a future and we shall always be enmeshed in conflicts. That is why we must now look not to the past, but to the future. If we say, we must look to the past, how can we ask Pakistan not to look to the past ? We have to chose—either both look to the past or both say goodbye to the past, let us try to build a new future. It is easier for us to say good–bye to the past; because we have never preached hatred. At the worst of times, we have expressed our concern for the people of Pakistan, we have expressed our sorrows at their being deluded by their leaders, by their military dictatorship and so on. We have never preached hatred against Pakistan. So, for us it is a little easier, but in the case of Pakistan which has promoted a hate-campaign, and which has attacked India so many times, is it realistic to expect a sudden washing away of past attitude and adoption of new ? It is not easy. These things do not come about by wishing or wanting. I think that President Bhutto is making a sincere effort to take his people towards a new future. Whether he will succeed or not, I do not know. But at least, he is making an effort, and I think that it is in our interest that his effort to turn the face of Pakistan from its past hatred and bitterness to a new future of peace and friendship is very much worth supporting.

During the debate it was also said that certain remarks here were not made for political purposes. This is a ridiculous statement. There is nothing in the world which is not political. The people who consider themselves as non-political are usually those who do not want change, but they are no less political than those who do want change.

We also remember that at the time of Bangladesh also, while everybody was with us and broadly supported us, there were parties which tried to take political advantage of the situation. They did raise the sort of issues which they thought would catch the public imagination, which would show the Government in a poor light, whether it was the Question of the refugees or the question of marching our Army into Bangladesh or anything else. Therefore, let us not get lulled by these soft words or imagine that these things were not political. All of us in this House are political beings, and we are very conscious of the political actions taken by others. Had there been no political motive, here would have been no reason to have the sort of *tamasha* a held on the border—that is the only word that

describes it. It was as a *tamasha*, that the people regarded it also. Or to have the sort of *tamasha* that we witnessed here.

There is one other point to demonstrate how little regard these people have for truth. Almost every day, there is some story of other in their newspaper which is completely fabricated and baseless. Today there was one which caused me some worry, something about a Pakistani attack on Naya Chor. I have enquired and am told that it is absolutely baseless. It is completely fabricated. So you see that there is a constant effort to renew an atmosphere of confrontation of giving out news that would incite people.

I do not want to say anything more at this stage. But there is one point. Some Members from my own party talk about hope in the leadership and so on, but this leadership has always stood for one thing, and that is hope in the people of India, confidence in the people of India. Let us not lose that, because that is our strength. I think that is India's strength. We are with the people. My colleague Shri Swaran Singh reminds me of an other point. It seems that apart from the other heavy work that the Jana Sangh has, they indulge in eavesdropping on telephone conversations–imaginary ones. I have not phoned to anybody while I was in Simla, neither privately nor officially....

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I do not remember whether the hon. Member* said that I phoned or Sardar Saheb phoned or Shri Yeshwantrao Chavan phoned or Shri Jagjivan Ram phoned or Shri F.A. Ahmed phoned or somebody else did so on our behalf. That is what I am replying to. It is immaterial whether they took my name or not. The question is whether anybody spoke to Moscow. I categorically declared that nobody spoke to any foreign country at all. We did receive a large number of messages from various countries hoping and wishing that the talks would be successful, but nobody gave us any advice as to what we should do for the good reason that they know that our reaction to such a advice is not very good. We like advice on some occasions, but not on all occasions because each country must make its own decisions. It is only the country itself and the leaders of the country who can judge what is in the interest of the country. Nobody from outside, however great a friend or enemy, can tell us what is in the true interest of India. We knew, as I have said earlier, that nobody from outside can be interested in our strength; it is only we ourselves who are concerned.

Therefore, I plead with the hon. Members of the Jana Sangh not to be the voice of outside reaction as well as of reaction inside the country. Today they are repeating what the enemies of India outside are saying. That is what the Jana Sangh is propagating.

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* Shri Hukum Chand Kachwai.

*Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, it is a little difficult to speak here on this occasion because almost the entire House is with us on this matter....

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It is difficult because all points have been made and all the questions you have asked have been answered not once but many times over.** The Member who himself started off by saying that we do not listen to the voice of the people, that it is only the Congress which is trying to promote a particular point of view, ended the speech—I think one of the hon. Members from this side said that when a speech is long, sometimes there is bound to be contradiction—on the note that they stand alone and isolated. It did not begin on that note. It began on a very brave note as if the whole world was behind them and the Congress alone was trying to propagate another point of view. But he ended on this other note as was only natural.

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Sir, it is the same hon. Member who again and again advises us to listen with patience, to be quiet, has not the courtesy or the decency to listen to a single speech patiently.*** Not one criticism can be made against them. They can use the most abusive words, they can use violence, they can make the sort of vulgar and ridiculous demonstration as they did in the other House. That is all right for them. But if anyone from here says anything about them, they bob up, not one but six or seven of them. Yesterday I noted that when their leader was speaking, it was not enough that he was speaking, the rest of them had to stand up and not allowed even his voice to be heard. This is their idea of decency, this is their idea of decorum. It is not our idea. This is another reason why I say it is difficult to speak. Then he spoke about Sardar Saheb—I think he was trying to have a dig at him—that he cannot understand what he says. Now, our Foreign Minister has travelled to the far corners of the world. No where has there been any difficulty amongst high people, Heads of State, amongst low people, ordinary people, in understanding him. so if there was something wrong in the manner of his presenting our case, surely some other people would have complained "we cannot understand him". But nowhere have we heard this before. Only this one party has objected that they do not understand him. Does the fault lie with Sardar Saheb or with those who do not understand him ? Sir, here the question is one of a basic difference. It is not concerned with words or events; it is not even a question merely of the Simla Agreement. It is a question, as I said the other day, of the manner in which this party has been born, the circumstances in which it was born. The hon. Member made a cheap jibe at the birth of my party. No matter what the Jan Sangh says the Congress was born more than 80 years ago. The policies which the Congress is following today as you can see from the resolutions of the Congress—Not from what I say or anybody on this side might say; are the policies laid down by our great leaders. To

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* During discussion in Rajya Sabha on a motion regarding the Simla Agreement, *R.S. Deb.*, 2 August 1972, cc. 294-308.

** Replying to Dr. Bhai Mahavir's question, "Why is it difficult ?"

*** Responding to Dr. Bhai Mahavir's observation, "In this House we are alone; we know that."

make such a cheap jibe only demonstrates the lack of any other argument. Sir, I have not got up to answer arguments. As I have said, this is a matter of basic difference. My hon. friend opposite also spoke about temper. He rightly remarked that those who have no arguments show anger. Now, Sir, it is true that when I spoke the other day, I spoke firmly and strongly but I did not speak with temper in my voice or in my words. I should like this House and the public to judge whether my speech was a show of temper or the action of the hon. Member's party did was a show of temper. It is not my opinion against their opinion. The whole Parliament was witness. The records are witness to what happened. It may be that the Member insists they are right and all others are wrong. If that be so it would mean that not only is the Congress wrong, not only are all the other political parties of this country wrong, but all the countries of the world are also wrong. This is an issue on which the entire world seems to be united. There has been tremendous enthusiasm for this Agreement and for the new spirit that they see awakened on our sub-continent. Where is the enthusiasm less ? I wonder if my honourable friends have taken the trouble to examine this. Nobody has been quiet. But whose appreciation or enthusiasm has been muted ? It is those people whose enthusiasm has been muted whenever there has been any question of the interest or strength of India—I would even say that it is those people who have been actively against our interest. Those are the voices in the world today which are not so strong and enthusiastic in favour of this Agreement. Would it be wrong if we say, as some honourable friends have said, that this party is echoing those outside voices ? I have no hesitation in repeating that what the Jan Sangh wants in India is what the military regime in Pakistan had wanted in Pakistan. History has shown that this policy has failed. (*Interruptions*) It is no use shaking your head. This is the picture, a picture of confrontation. When I spoke of toys I did not mean that land was a toy (*Interruptions*). I was speaking about the conception or the attitude of demanding a tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye. That is not a mature attitude nor an attitude which in today's world can be advantageous to our country. Neither is the spirit of bargaining, which another honourable friend has advised. We are not out to bargain. We are a mature people who have only one aim before us and that is how to make our country strong. And by strength we do not mean merley military strength. I think that is a small part of a country's strength. When we talk of strength, we mean the strength of the people. And that can come only when the people have understanding, when they have maturity and when the affairs of the nation are dealt with a certain amount of sagacity and foresight. Nobody has made the claim for the Simla Agreement that all problems are solved. In fact I would say that this is simply not possible at any time anywhere in the world. Problems will always remain. Our endeavour is to take each step so as to be in a better position to face the new problems that must arise. With the Simla Agreement India is in a better position to face the future. In fact I would say that the Simla Agreement is in pursuance of the domestic and the international policy which India has followed all these years. Since independence and even before independence this is what the Congress Party has believed in. It believed even then in friendship with all countries. It believed even then in peace in the world and a cooperative endeavour to end the poverty and the misery of the under–privileged of the world. At a time when we had no strength in our hands or in our voices, we had no wealth, no armaments or anything, even at that time, we stood solidly by all those who were equally oppressed. We did not make the excuse that we had our own struggle and never could help the people of Africa,

that we could not pay attention to what was happening in Asia. On the contrary we stated this even though we were poor, we were weak, but whatever we had, the strength of our voice, our moral support or whenever we can give more than moral support, that would be at the disposal of all those who were in similar situations. Whatever our relations with China today, India was the first and the only country which sent a medical team to China at that time. And in what conditions did this team live ? I saw some of the Members when they left and I saw them on their return. I could not recognise them when they came back. They looked more like skeletons. This was because of lack of food and lack of sleep. They could have refused to stay in such conditions and said. "We cannot work". But they had gone to do a job and they did it. This was the spirit. This was the spirit of our policies and it is in this spirit that we act today also.

Shri S.D. Misra saw a change in our foreign policy because I mentioned Asia and said it was time for Asian countries to cooperate more closely. May be I shall disappoint him. But there is no change in our policy. Why should we change when the rest of the world is coming round to our way of thinking? If it is necessary and if we find that this policy no longer serves the interests of India, then we shall not stick to it. We shall be the first to change. But what do we see today ? We see that the countries which had opposed us and which had abused us are one by one coming round to our policy. I think it was hon. Member, Shri V.P. Dutt who spoke of this. They may not use the word 'non-alignment'. But what does 'non-alignment' mean ? It means that regardless of the political system of a country and regardless of the attitude of a country, you can build bridges with that country. Between no two countries was there greater enmity than the United States of America and China. In fact if there was a certain amount of tension between us and the United States it was on this ground, namely, our friendship with China and the Soviet Union. What do we find now ? We are left behind and they are more 'bhai-bhai' than anybody else. The best food is Chinese food and the best medical treatment is Acupuncture. In the United States and many parts of Europe many think that the best is Chinese soon after, a journey to the Soviet Union was arranged and there were some more embracings and hand shakes. What for ? If any vindication or proof is necessary—I do not think it is necessary—this shows ours is the right policy. On one point I agree with Dr. Bhai Mahavir and I have said in my public meetings, not only now but from the beginning, that I stand for certain things. I am very happy if the people are with me. If they are not, yet I consider my stand to be the right one, I must stand alone.

We stand for particular policies. Today a great change is taking place all over the world. More and more people are accepting certain realities. May be the U.S. Administration in spite of its new found friendship with some countries, is not changing. But we cannot ignore the fact that the young people of America are giving deeper thought to these matters. So the world is changing. We have been told by some hon. Members that there have been other agreements with Pakistan, what has happened to them ? And is spite of previous talks about peace have there not been wars ? There have been wars. We cannot deny this. But we cannot deny also that today the situation in India has changed. Today there is more political cohesion and greater unity amongst the people. In every way the country is stronger and I think that our people have better understanding of the problems of the country and

are willing to sacrifice, to fight and to face the challenges of the future. There is a great change in Pakistan. It may be that the Pakistanis did not want that change. But the change is there regardless of whether they desire it or not. They cannot ignore that change. When we look at the situation, we cannot also ignore that this change has taken place. Even President Bhutto himself has admitted that he was the father of the policy of confrontation with India. He himself now acknowledges that the situation has changed today and that the need of the times is peace. So things have changed. Some opposite Members have taken me and Sardar Saheb, to task because we have not categorically asserted that we know that there will be no war, that we know that President Bhutto is a different man. I don't do so. I am not used to making such categorical statements. I can only describe our assessment of the situation and I can also say with some assurance that so far I have not often been wrong in my assessment. So, what I say is my assessment of the situation.

Some of the questions which are being put today, "How do you know that this will not happen ?". "Peace will not be peace", etc., those same questions were posed at the time of Bangladesh also. It was said very categorically, "You say that the refugees will return. But we know that they will not return and we know that you will not be able to send them back." They do not think that Bangladesh could be freed. But, all those events did happen, this is obvious to all. A hundred and one events are taking place every day which are equally true, equally relevant, which are not so tangible to the opposition or even to some of us. Nevertheless, these things are happening. There are vast forces at work in India in Pakistan and all over the world. The question before us is this : Do we encourage these good forces or do we put a spoke in its wheel ? To my mind, this is a straightforward question before us. It is possible that one makes the best effort possible and yet one fails. But is that reason to say that we should not make that effort ? So, we have made an effort and I believe that we have succeeded, in so far as we can, in the first step. I do not know whether at the second step we can go very much further. But I know that a beginning has been made from which it will be difficult for anybody to go back. If something untoward does happen, as I have said in the other House and at other places, if there is war, well, we are ready, then we cannot say, "No, we have accepted peace and therefore, we are not ready for this attack". But, we will do everything possible to see that peace succeeds and succeeds with honour. Why? Because—I have said this many times—peace is an ideal and we do believe in ideals. But peace is also a necessity.

I have always believed and I do believe even today that India's major enemy is not Pakistan it is not even the big powers which are interested in their spheres of influence. India's greatest enemy is the economic backwardness of the country. It is the poverty of the country. If we did not have that heavy handicap, we could have done many things in the world. But, we have the handicap and nobody is going to help us to over come it except we ourselves and we cannot over come it unless we have peace. Therefore, peace is essential for our country and I believe that it is essential for Pakistan. I also believe that tension between the three countries of the subcontinent, will always be a weakening factor and one which may be exploited by outside forces. So, the second question before us is this : Do we want interference by outside forces or do we want to settle our affairs ourselves however difficult they may be? We have believed that we must settle differences amongst

ourselves however complex they may be and a beginning in that direction has also been made.

I am sorry, I have diverted from my point about Asian unity. I have spoken about Asia. I should like the countries of Asia to be united. But unity for what purpose ? You cannot have unity by giving up your ideals, values or your basic principles. In Asia, we follow a certain policy. Why ? Not because we do not like America and so if America does something we must be perverse and criticize America. Not at all. Personally I am not against America or any other country. But, we do disapprove of what the U.S. Administration is doing in Vietnam. We believe that this U.S. action is not only against the interests of the people of Vietnam, it is against the interests of every country in Asia and every country in the world. But, there are countries in Asia which are supporting this American policy. What can we do ? We want to be friends with them. But we can't have that close friendship with them as we have can with countries which agree with our policy.

Just a few months back, hon. Members opposite were every anxious that we should be friends with Taiwan. I do not know whether their enthusiasm is as great today. The enthusiasm of the Western countries in this matter is not only waning, it has completely collapsed. The situation is developing as we had always thought it would be one day. We could not prophesy that it would happen in 1970, 1971 or 1972. But we knew that it would happen.

We want the countries of Asia to stand together not against Africa or Latin America. We want them also. But when we can look after our own home first, only them can we be effective in a larger circle. From that point of view, what happens in Asia is of our more immediate concern. But we are equally interested in the peaceful development and progress of the under-privileged and developing countries of Africa and Latin America. But we can play a greater role in Asia and therefore, we must at least try to solve the quarrels and tensions of Asia as soon as we can.

Hon. Members, I hope, will forgive me if I digress a little. If you look back into history, you will see that every country started with small units, gradually increasing India is one country. We know that each of our States has some problems with neighbouring States. Now, they can quarrel and they can go to war as did the old *rajas* on all kinds of small and big matters or they can settle these matters peacefully. One State may suffer a little or another may suffer a little. But in the process we evolve something by which we can all become much stronger. And it is this that makes a nation. Fortunately, in our country we have that spirit in the States now. A number of long standing problems of the States are being gradually solved, because each realises that by not coming to an agreement both suffer equally and the whole country suffers.

So we have to look at the problem of friendship with Pakistan from that angle—not can we get something from Pakistan ? Can Pakistan take something from us ? But, 'can we create an atmosphere and a situation in which we can together face the far greater outside dangers that threaten us ?'

The other point raised was, how was it that at first no agreement could be reached and then suddenly at the end there was agreement ? Now, nothing happens so suddenly. There is preparation for whatever happens. You can say that war was won on a particular day. But we did not arrive at it suddenly; we were working towards that end all the time. The battle is on before the war; the preparation is there. As Kesriji said, factories are working, people are working and training is going on. All that goes into the ultimate winning of the war. When you are having talks, you proceed gradually. Immediate decision does not come because naturally during the talks you make certain points and so on. But the preparation is there all the time. With every meeting you are moving. The agreement was signed at a certain time. Well, that was because of circumstances. A dinner had been arranged. It was a formal dinner; it could not be postponed. A Press Conference had been arranged; that could not be postponed. Obviously, the final thing had to wait until after all this was over. If we could have said, "Let us postpone those and finish the business" well, that business could perhaps have been completed by Six O'clock. It need not have waited for so long. These are all small points.

It is not my intention to compare this agreement with the Tashkent one because as I have said, the situation, the circumstances in both the countries, the attitudes of the people all are entirely different. But since my hon. friend opposite has quoted President Bhutto at such length. I shall also refer to a remark. President Bhutto has said that he had not accepted the Tashkent Agreement. He did not accept it while he was in Tashkent. He went back and told his country he had not accepted it and, according to him, his country also did not accept. Well, whether it was so or not I do not know. He has said this. but the Simla Agreement he has accepted and other parties in Pakistan have accepted it. Whether we like him or not, he has also got elected with a fairly big majority. His party has the majority there but even in places where he has not, other parties have accepted the agreement. President Bhutto is trying, and I think trying with success, to get the people of Pakistan to accept it. Just as there are some voices in India against it, there are voices in Pakistan against it. So, this is also a big difference between the two agreements.

Now I do not want to go into the business of the United Nations. Quiet honestly I am not bothered whether they go to the United Nations or whether they do not go to the United Nations. I am sure of ourselves, I am sure of whatever delegation we send there. If Pakistan goes to the United Nations we can meet them there. I have no fear of their getting away with anything at the United Nations. If they want to go to war—as I said, we do not want to go to war—we should like to do everything possible not to have war. But if they attack us we are prepared for that also. I am not afraid of that I have full confidence in our armies; I have full confidence in our people. These are all false bogeys or red herrings to divert us from our real path.

Mention was made of opportunity. This was the very first opportunity we have had of making a new beginning towards peace and we have grasped that opportunity. If we had let this opportunity pass, I do not think it would have come our way again at least in this generation. So we have not let any opportunity go.

In his brilliant and lucid speech, the hon. Member, Shri V.P. Dutt, said that we respond to situations. Of course we respond to situations but I hope he will concede that we also

take some initiatives; we also make moves which will create new situations. We do not always wait for a situation to develop. From the beginning we have taken a number of steps and we do not intend to let the initiative out of our hands. As in this country so abroad also our tactics have not been the tactics of confrontation even with the Jana Sangh much as they would take to provoke us. Occasionally some of our Members do get provoked but I do not think that this gains us anything and I have never supported this sort of thing. My way of handling situations, is entirely different here or anywhere. It is to work for a situation which is conducive to certain thinking action. Now, the Jana Sangh was very vocal against socialism: we do not hear that now. The Jan Sangh was very vocal against non-alignment; we do not hear that now. And not only the Jana Sangh. You will not hear such remarks from almost anybody in public now. A situation is created, public opinion is created in which such remarks are not acceptable. It is in our hands to create a situation where on a larger screen, even in international affairs, certain things do not happen. I cannot prophesy that all will go as we want but we do have a certain strength, a certain initiative in our hands and if we can use it to good purpose that is a much better way them to aggravate the atmosphere of confrontation. Now if I say something about the Jana Sangh they may be very upset but one thing has to be said it is too important to let pass; otherwise I do not like provoking anyone Shri Pranab Kumar Mukherjee drew our attention to a valid point. During the Bangladesh struggle the Jana Sangh were not really concerned with the people of Bangladesh, they were interested in how they could exploit the situation for party ends. I am sorry that they have dealt with the present situation of some of the refugees who have come over to Rajasthan and Gujarat in the same manner. Some words have been uttered, as they were in the other House, which can bring great harm to those people. They do not affect me in any way; they do not affect our party in any way; but they can cause trouble for the people living there. This is why I asked the hon. Member not to utter them.

I was also sorry regarding and the manner in which Shri Misra spoke about Kashmir. Here also it is not a question of what I say about the people of Kashmir or what the hon. Member who actually comes from the valley says. What is the test of a people's loyalty ? The test is that every time there was an invasion of Kashmir, the people of Kashmir stood solidly by India. Does this not show that they are with us ? To doubt their loyalty and sincerity is not good—I am not saying that the hon. Member is deliberately echoing the remarks of some foreigners, some enemies of India. For an Indian to say such thing does not help the situation in any way. I should like to express my deep appreciation of the past that in spite of religion being evoked—and we know that when religion is injected into any arguments people sometimes tend to lose their rationality—the people of Kashmir have been solidly with us in every crisis and I have no doubt they will remain so. I am not afraid of any speeches. The actions which the hon. Member considers necessary are such as we might take if we were afraid we are not afraid. We know we can face the situation. We think that this is a better way to handle people rather than being frightened or giving the impression—that we are frightened.

There was some talk about our relations with our smaller neighbours. We want to have good relations with all our neighbours and we have done everything possible to convince them of our friendship for them, of our concern for them and of our desire to help them

but whether the sort of jingoistic and chauvinistic speeches which are sometimes made in the House or outside, it is for the hon. Members themselves to consider will inspire confidence in these small countries. If the feeling is created that we are out to get what we can in a chauvinistic manner, will these countries be confident of these safety ? I am just posing the question.

I think it was Shri D.P. Singh who said that I have changed President Bhutto. I make no such tall claim. Events have changed him and it is in our hands to see and guide events in such manner that he remains changed, that he remains convinced that peace & friendship are in his interest, and in the interest of Pakistan.

So, Sir, the basic issue before us is, what sort of world do we want ? Are we concerned with the world or are we concerned only with India and do we think that India can develop isolated from the world ? The Jana Sangh, although born much later than our party, lives somewhat in the past and, if I may say so, they look further back, into the more remote past. We live in the present and we look to the future. It is only by looking towards the future and endeavouring to shape the future that the present can be made livable. And to make it livable we must have peace. We must have a constructive and creative attitude. The Simla Agreement, with all its faults, is a good step. I know that would get a wry face from Mr. Bhai Mahavir.

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Everything has faults*. Nothing is perfect. it is not only the poet who has said this. In the world nothing is perfect. There is no rose without a thorn. There is no solution which does not create problems. This is part of life itself. There is no life without death. There is no point in using the word 'perfect'. Nothing in life is perfect unless you are willing to settle for something much less and call it 'perfect', which I am not willing to do. My sights are rather higher. So, we are looking towards the future and we believe that the Simla Agreement has taken us as step in the right direction. We are in a position to go further along that road. So far a we can make out—I have also read Mr. Bhutto's speech very carefully—on the whole the speech does not give the same impression that some isolated excerpts had conveyed even to me when I first read the reports in our newspapers. So, it seems that President Bhutto also believes that his future and the future of Pakistan lies in peaceful neighbourly relations. This is all we can hope for. We cannot hope to convert him that peace is an ideal situation, or that he must be friends with India for the sake of friendship. That is far too much to hope and we are not hoping. We are only hoping that conditions will be such that he will realise—as he does seems to do—that this is the only way for them. Actually, even between the debate in the Lok Sabha and the debate in the Rajya Sabha. I think there has been some slight change in the Jana Sangh attitude, (*Interruptions*) tactics ? Even their substitute motion is an indication. So, I sincerely hope that since they have come this little way they will go a little further and will join the whole country and prove that they also want peace, cooperation and friendship with all our neighbours so that together we can work towards a better world.

* Replying to Dr. Bhai Mahavir's remark : "No, but there are the faults".

U.N. Membership to China*

Madam, my attention has been drawn to some Press reports regarding a statement attributed to the Deputy Prime Minister** on the question of our policy relating to the recognition of China. In a Press Conference on the 12th September at the Indian Embassy in Washington, the Deputy Prime Minister was asked the following question :

"Will you be in the forefront about the admission of China into the United Nations ?"

The Deputy Prime Minister replied, "We have not been in the forefront in the last 15 years. That is all I know. Every nation ought to be in the United Nations. That is the stand we have taken. But we are not now sponsoring a resolution, but if it is sponsored we will certainly vote for it." The Deputy Prime Minister was further questioned :

"Do you mean that there should be two Chinas in the U.N. ?"

To this he replied, "I do not know. There are at present two countries. Formosa is an independent country as it is. And it is a member of the U.N., though in the name of China, which I don't understand."

My attention has also been drawn to some Press reports regarding the alleged clarification issued by the spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs regarding the statements of the Deputy Prime Minister on China during his visit abroad. I have seen the relevant papers and I am satisfied that the spokesman not only did not issue any explanatory clarification about the Deputy Prime Minister's statement but in fact and quite rightly refused to comment on it. He was handed over routine questions by some correspondents on the Government of India's China policy. After obtaining my clearance of the draft answers, he gave them to the correspondents. There was no reference to the Deputy Prime Minister in these questions and answers.

There is no change in Government's China policy. We continue to recognise the People's Republic of China.***

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* Statement regarding the reported statement made by the Deputy Prime Minister about "Two Chinas", *R.S. Deb.*, 20 November, 1967, cc. 163-66.

** Shri Morarji R. Desai.

*** An identical statement was made in Lok Sabha also *(L.S. Deb.*, 15 November, 1967, cc. 740-41)

Both Taiwan and the People's Republic of China claim to represent the whole of China. Neither of them claim that they should be separately recognised and both of them consider that Taiwan is an integral part of mainland China. Therefore, neither of them accepts the existence of the other.

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But for us to ignore the People's Republic of China, which is the large land mass of China and which controls the affairs of over 700 million people would, I think, be rather unrealistic. I entirely agree with the hon. Member* that they are not friendly to us. They are making very provocative statements and they have, of course, exhibited open hostility and have been in conflict with us. All these things are true, but I do not think that this situation will change in any way by our changing our policy. As far as gathering information is concerned, that is quite a separate matter, and I think we can get the same information through other means.

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* Shri Lokanath Misra.

Emergence of an Independent State of South Yemen*

After more than one century and a quarter of colonial domination, South Arabia today emerges as a free and independent nation—The People's Republic of South Yemen. On this auspicious occasion, we extend our greetings and offer our good wishes to the Government and the people of the new State. We also pay our tribute to the valiant freedom fighters who have laid down their lives during the struggle for their independence.

There have been close and intimate relations for centuries between India and South Arabia. It shall be the earnest endeavour of the Government of India to further strengthen our relations with the independent State and also to extend such economic and technical assistance as we can and which they may need.

As the House is aware, India has consistently supported the right to independence and sovereignty for the people of South Arabia, and for many years now we have made earnest efforts for the achievement of this aim through the United Nations and otherwise. Therefore, it is a matter of great satisfaction and pleasure to us that South Arabia is now an independent nation.

The independence of South Arabia is yet another step towards decolonisation in the world. It is earnestly hoped that the day is not far off when the remaining colonised peoples and countries will also become independent.

The Government of India has extended recognition to the People's Republic of South Yemen and it is our intention to convert our Commission in Aden into an Embassy with a resident Ambassador. The necessary steps in this regard have already been initiated.

I am sure that all Members of this House, as also the people of India, join me in extending a warm welcome to the new State of the People's Republic of South Yemen in the comity of nations and in wishing it a bright future.

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* Statement regarding independence of the People's Republic of South Yemen, *L.S. Deb.*, 30 November, 1967, cc. 3855–56.

Expulsion of Indians from African Countries*

I can assure the hon. Member** that my heart bleeds as much as his heart bleeds. I have not had the privilege of living there for 30 years but I have visited Zanzibar twice and have had the opportunity of meeting many people while I was there, also many people who come to India from there come to meet me.

There are certain difficulties which are inherent in the situation....

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They are more than difficulties. I am a little bit limited perhaps of my knowledge of the language. I do not want to give a rosy picture at all. That is far from my intention. We fully realise the very severe hardship which these people are facing. But there are certain historical movements and so on when people have been oppressed and when they gain their freedom, they do tend to hit out. In that hitting out they quite often, in fact very often, hit out those who are not responsible even. I do not want to go into an exposition of all this long history or the reasons which have caused this. In such a situation outside people who are there, unfortunately they have lived as outsiders. Many of our Indian friends, although I have my full sympathies for them, have not become one with the African people; they have lived separately. In fact, if I may say something–that was said to me–on my first visit to Kenya. At one of the public meetings one of the African leaders got up and said, we hear a great deal from you about Indian culture but there are many Indians living here, they have not been interested to show anything of Indian culture.

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Well, this was said, at a public meeting where a very large majority were Indians.*** I had also the privilege of having a luncheon in my honour by an Indian family where, although that family had been living there for two generations, it was for the first time that an African was invited. This was said by this African in front of the host and in front of me.

We have to look at this problem from a proper point of view and as I have said, really our sympathy goes out to those people who have not made these mistakes deliberately.

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* During a Calling Attention regarding the reported expulsion of Indians from Kenya and other States of East Africa, *R.S. Deb.*, 22 February, 1968, cc. 1682-89.

** Dr. B.N. Antani.

*** Replying to Dr. B.N. Antani's observation, "That is not true".

Perhaps at that time there was a lack of realisation of the situation and also a lack of studying the whole historical process of the likely outcome. We warned them that this might happen but they did not heed our warning.

Now, we do get full reports. It may be that some of the latest events which the hon. Member has mentioned, we do not know. We will look into them with great urgency, with great seriousness and with sympathy. But I am told that the High Commissioner visited Zanzibar in January of this year. And whatever specific points the hon. Member has mentioned, as I have said, we will look into them very quickly.

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They* are welcome. If they want to become Indian nationals they will certainly be welcome. I have already expressed my deep sympathy to them for their problems and troubles. But I would like to assure the hon. Member** that there is no question of any duress at all. If they accepted British nationality it was because they thought that thereby they would perhaps pay less taxes or be able to save their goods. I do not think that was a very right attitude on their part. We on our part are willing to do everything.

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It is obvious, Sir, that if we had a Resident representative it would help in the situation. The need for a local representative is felt in many areas and we are trying our best to fill these.

* People of Indian origin.

** Shri M.M. Dharia.

Jurisdiction over Katchchativu Island*

Hon. Members might recall that in the past questions have been asked concerning the Island of Katchchativu in both Houses of Parliament. As was stated in reply to question No. 896 in the Lok Sabha on the 30th August, 1960.

There is some controversy between us and the Ceylon Government as regards jurisdiction over the Island.

Fishermen from India and Ceylon use the Island during the fishing season which lasts from February to April. There is a small Church which Catholic pilgrims from India and Ceylon visit every year during in Saint Anthony's festival in March. Saint Anthony is the patron Saint of fishermen.

Our High. Commissioner called on the hon. Prime Minister of Ceylon and last week our External Affairs Ministry also called the High Commissioner of Ceylon in Delhi. I have now received a message from the hon. Prime Minister of Ceylon, both through our High Commissioner in Colombo and Ceylon High Commissioner in Delhi, that he is agreeable to any matter concerning Katchchativu being discussed in accordance with the procedure laid down during my meeting with him in September last year. Hon. Members will recall that it was agreed then that "senior officials of the two Governments should meet once a year alternately in Colombo and New Delhi to review the progress of India-Ceylon relations in all fields and exchange views on other matters of common interest." We appreciate this friendly approach and propose to discuss this in accordance with the above procedure which appears adequate to deal with the situation both in our opinion and in the opinion of the Ceylon Government.

It is proposed to discuss the question of this Island with the Government of Ceylon in the near future. Bearing in mind our fraternal relations with Ceylon and the fact that we have settled several difficult problems with them in a peaceful and friendly manner, we have every hope that this question also can be settled in a similar manner.

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I agree with the hon. Member.** As a matter of fact this controversy is even longer than thirty years, but we do want to settle it in a peaceful manner. I can assure the hon. Member that there is no question of having a tribunal or anything like that.

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* Statement in response to a Calling Attention about the reported occupation by Ceylon of the Katchchativu Island in the Palkstrait, *R.S. Deb.*, 4 March, 1968, cc. 3013–17.

** Shri N.R. Muniswamy.

Well, naturally we do not want the problem to be further complicated and, therefore, we ourselves should also be careful in anything which we do or say. The Ceylon Government does have one problem which is that of illegal immigration and that is why during this period some people go to the Island. As hon. Members know, it is not inhabited. There is no habitation there and there is no drinking water. It is only during the festival in March–that people come to the Church there. It is the contention of the Government of Ceylon that the people who want to enter Ceylon illegally go there under the garb of pilgrims and then proceed to Ceylon. Now, I agree with the hon. Member* that this matter should be looked into and, even without its being raised here, this matter was proposed to be taken up.

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The stand has been clarified on the floor of this House, as well as in the other House many times, that we have accepted that there is a controversy**. There are even some claims. The Government of Ceylon has made certain claims and there is a controversy regarding the jurisdiction over this land for many, many years. As far as the word 'inhabited' is concerned, it was used only to show that there was nobody living there, that there was no physical possession of it by any side. That was the point.

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* Shri M.P. Bhargava.

** Replying to the point raised by Shri Harish Chandra Mathur about the state of habitation in Katchchativu Island and the territorial jurisdiction over it.

Katchchativu Island*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I should first like to state that the allegation made by the hon. Member Shri Madhu Limaye, that my colleague Shri B.R. Bhagat or I had misinformed or misled the House, is baseless.

On 1st March 1968 during the questions and answers which arose on the statement made by my colleague, Shri Bhagat, about the Katchchativu Island, the Minister of State stated, and I quote :

> So far as the possession of the Island is concerned, this Island is completely uninhabited; nobody lives there. There is not even water there. Therefore, it is in nobody's possession.

The Minister was not able to complete his reply because of interruptions.

During the subsequent proceedings hon. Member Shri Kundu suggested that I should clarify the point made by the Minister. I stated later as follows :

> As the Minister tried to explain earlier, we do not have the full information at this moment. We have had very friendly relations with the people and the Government of Ceylon and, I think, the more we say on this issue just now, the more are the chances that it may create difficulties. It is better to have fuller information which the Minister has already promised. We will make a statement...About occupation, if you mean by the Army, he (that is the Minister) has said that nobody is in occupation. This does not mean title or sovereignty....

Hon. Member Shri Limaye said that he had inquired about military, police or civil control. I replied and again quote :

> As the Minister has stated this is an uninhabited Island. There is occasionally, I think, some religious function at which people go there. I think, with your permission, if the hon. Member would be a little patient and wait for us to get fuller information....

Coming now to the proceedings of 27th March, hon. Member Shri Limaye observed that Shri Bhagat had on the previous occasion given assurance that neither India nor Ceylon was in possession of the Island. I then pointed out, and I quote again :

> †I replied immediately when hon. Member raised this question. That possession meant that no one had physical possession there. But I also mentioned then that ever since illegal smuggling or immigration to Sri Lanka via Katchchativu had begun, it started sending its immigration officer there to seek information.

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* Statement regarding the Katchchativu Island, *L.S. Deb.*, 1 April, 1968, cc. 1216–19.

† Translated from Hindi.

On Shri Limaye's point whether Government had information about the presence of Ceylonese Naval craft and of Ceylonese police on the Island, I stated as follows :

> They have Naval patrolling, we also have Naval patrolling. We are anxious to see that....

Due to the interruption which followed, I was not able to complete my remarks.

I later explained, and I quote again :

> As far as Ceylon and Katchchativu is concerned, we had a discussion on it and I explained the situation. Shri Limaye asked a question, and I again say that as far as Naval patrolling is concerned, we, both the countries, have been patrolling that area throughout. But at the time of this particular festival, Ceylon faces a special problem which is that of illegal immigration. It is to check that illegal immigration that they take certain steps and they assured us that they would not do anything this year which they have not done previously....

As far as the particular newspaper report about this year was concerned, what I actually stated was as follows :

> We have made inquiries from our High Commissioner there about this matter. Naturally, he will also speak with the Ceylon Government. We are awaiting his report.

There was no question of any mis–statement or of deliberately misleading the House. When my colleague, Shri Bhagat, said that neither side had possession of the Island, he made clear what he had in mind, and so did I. As for reports about the presence of Ceylonese Naval boats at the Island, at this year's festival, or the over–flying of the Ceylonese aircraft, and so on, what I stated was that we were making inquiries and awaiting reports.

I might add that we are examining the entire matter fully. We are also examining the documents including those of the Raja of Ramnad. There is no question of any mis-statement on our part.

Sir, when this question came up on the previous occasions, I had referred to our friendly relations with the Government and people of Ceylon. I had appealed that we should not say or do anything which might cause embarrasment to our relations with this friendly neighbour. I had also discussed the matter with some hon. Members from the Opposition. There has been general appreciation in the House of the need for restraint and caution in raising the matter on the floor of the House. Therefore I do sincerely regret that hon. Member Shri Limaye should have again chosen to bring up the matter in this form.

Efforts to Bring Normalcy in Sri Lanka*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, last week I announced that the President of Sri Lanka was sending a personal representative to New Delhi to discuss the situation in Sri Lanka with me. Mr. H.W. Jayewardene, this special emissary, is now in Delhi. He has had discussions with me as also with our Minister for External Affairs.**

I conveyed to Mr. Jayewardene the deep concern of our Parliament and of the people of India at the recent happenings in Sri Lanka and our distress at the human suffering resulting therefrom. We have always condemned such violence, killings and discrimination, especially when the victims are defenceless.

I took the opportunity to reassure Mr. Jayewardene that India stands for the independence, unity and integrity of Sri Lanka. India does not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. However, because of the historical, cultural and such other close ties between the peoples of the two countries, particularly between the Tamil community of Sri Lanka and us, India cannot remain unaffected by such events there.

Mr. Jayewardene told us that the situation in Sri Lanka is fast returning to normal. According to him, the number of people in refugee camps has come down from 80,000 to 30,000. He said that most people are returning to their homes, but the Government would still be left with the problems of the several thousand people who have been rendered homeless. The Sri Lanka authorities are making arrangements for their relief and rehabilitation for which a special agency of the Government has been set up.

The tragic sufferings of Indian nationals and the people of Indian origin, living in Sri Lanka have aroused spontaneous sympathy from all sections of our people. This was movingly expressed in debates in our Parliament in the last few days. The immediate task before us is to provide succour to those who have suffered in the disturbances. The Government of India are doing whatever they can to render relief to the affected persons. But this is a big task which the Government cannot accomplish alone; public co-operation is important. I have, therefore, decided to constitute a "Sri Lanka Relief Fund" and a "Sri Lanka Relief Fund Committee" under my chairmanship with an initial contribution of Indian Rs. 1 crore (i.e. ten million) from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund. I appeal to my fellow citizens including those living abroad, to contribute generously to the Fund

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* Making a Statement regarding the Situation in Sri Lanka, *L.S. Deb.*, 12 August, 1983, cc. 321–24.

** Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao.

and thereby express their anguish and sympathy for the unfortunate victims of this senseless violence in a tangible and positive manner.

Sir, in reply to my question about the recent law vesting damaged and abandoned properties in the Government, Mr. Jayewardene explained that this measure was taken in the interest of the affected persons to prevent distress sales, unlawful occupation and other such possible misuse.

I conveyed to Mr. Jayewardene that while measures were being taken to meet the immediate situation, the process of finding a permanent solution to satisfy the legitimate aspirations, and to ensure the security, of the Tamil minority will have to be urgently initiated.

Mr. Jayewardene has conveyed the following information to me :

The President of Sri Lanka had intended to place before the Round-Table Conference, which could not be held, certain proposals, which included (a) full implementation of the laws relating to the District Development Councils; (b) the use of Tamil as provided for in the Constitution as a national language; (c) to initiate a dialogue on amnesty on condition that violence will be given up; (d) discontinuance of the active role of the armed forces in Jaffna on the cessation of terrorist violence; and (e) the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

In addition, he said, if the idea of a separate State is abandoned the President is willing to discuss the release of those detained in prisons not already convicted or awaiting trial, and to implement any other assurance contained in the 1977 manifesto of the UNP. I am sharing this information with hon. Members.

I expressed my view that these proposals may not meet the aspirations of the Tamil community. Mr. Jayewardene told me that the Sri Lankan Government are willing to consider any other proposals, which would give the Tamil minority their due share in the affairs of their country, within the framework of a united Sri Lanka. I give my opinion that discussion between the Government and the Tamil community on this broader basis would be useful and that a solution has to be sought at the conference table. I offered our good offices in whatever manner they may be needed. Mr. Jayewardene expressed his appreciation of this offer made in the context of the traditional friendly ties between our two countries. He later informed me that his President welcomes the offer.

The need of the hour is to reduce tensions and establish confidence. I hope that all concerned will feel able to meet at the Conference table in an atmosphere of goodwill and mutual trust to settle their problems.

Through Mr. Jayewardene, the President of Sri Lanka, has conveyed an invitation to our Parliament to send an all-party delegation to visit Sri Lanka.

The House will agree that the situation arising out of the events in Sri Lanka is serious and highly complex, and needs careful handling. The Government are dealing with it

appropriately and will continue to remain in close touch with the Government of Sri Lanka and others concerned. I appeal to the House and all sections of our people not to take any step which could result in aggravating the problems and hardships of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, and at the same time make it more difficult for us to help in the immediate task of relief and rehabilitation as well as of finding a lasting solution.*

* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi in Rajya Sabha also. (*R.S. Deb.*, 12 August, 1983, cc. 306–09.)

Situation in Sri Lanka*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, last week I informed the House about the outcome of my talks with President Jayewardene's Special Envoy. Immediately afterwards, Mr. G. Amirthalingam, the Leader of the Opposition in the Sri Lanka Parliament and Secretary-General of the TULF, the main party representing the Sri Lanka Tamils, left Jaffna for Delhi. Since his arrival on August 14, he has had talk with me in addition to meetings with our Foreign Minister and other Members of our Cabinet and Members of Parliament various parties. Yesterday, I once again telephoned to President Jayewardene.

I should like to inform the House of the result of the latest developments. On behalf of the TULF, Mr. Amirthalingam has also welcomed our offer of good offices, which, he said has introduced a basic change in regard to negotiations between his party and the Government of Sri Lanka. For many years, he and his party has sought fulfilment of the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Tamil people of the Island within a united Sri Lanka, but had failed to get any helpful response. On the contrary, the Tamils have been increasingly harassed, and the latest outrages against them have left them totally without confidence in negotiations. Mr. Amirthalingam and his colleagues did not find it possible to come to the negotiating table on the basis of past offers. However, he feels that as a result of India's efforts, the picture has changed and, although differences between the two sides remain deep, there might now be some possibility of a solution.

The basic need of the hour is to bring a sense of security among the people of Sri Lanka. This in turn can restore confidence in their living together and in working out permanent solutions which are satisfactory to the Tamil minority as well as to the Sinhala majority. The search for that permanent solution also needs to be undertaken as quickly as possible.

This can best be attempted at the conference table. As I have previously said, it is for the Sri Lankan Government to decide how and when a conference with the Tamil leaders can be brought. But because of our profound concern we have offered to help in whatever way we can. To arrive at any settlement, it is necessary for both sides to talk to each other. To facilitate this process of dialogue and to give effect to our good offices, I have offered to send a special envoy to meet President Jayewardene and others. During my telephone call last evening, President Jayewardene agreed to my suggestion. Accordingly, I have asked

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* Participating in the discussion under Rule 193, on the Statement made by the Prime Minister in the House on 12 August, 1983 on the Situation in Sri Lanka, *L.S. Deb.*, 18 August, 1983, cc. 412-14.

one of our distinguished and experienced diplomats Shri G. Parthasarathi to undertake this delegate and important task. He will visit Colombo next week.

I asked President Jayewardene about the latest conditions generally regarding security and specially in the refugee camps. He told me that they were steadily returning to normal and that only a few thousands now remained in the camps. In reply to my question about relief supplies, he said they had enough food and clothing but would get in touch with our High Commissioner should anything more be needed.

President Jayewardene and I agreed to remain in regular contact. He also agreed that his brother, with whom we had useful talks, would continue as his Special Envoy.

During the repeated discussions in this House, hon. Members have expressed their strength of feelings at the course of events. All sections of the people all over our country share these feelings, which transcend party and other differences. I am particularly aware of the deep emotions of our brothers and sisters in Tamilnadu over these tragic happenings. As I said in the other House, the agony of the Tamils in India and elsewhere is that of our entire nation. The brutality and insensate violence to which the Tamils of Sri Lanka have been subjected were vividly described by Mr. Amirthalingam in his talks here. My Government and I personally been conveying our own anguish and concern to the Government of Sri Lanka.

At the same time, we must always bear in mind the effect of anything we say or do. Nearly all hon. Members have recognised the delicacy and difficulty of the situation with which we have to deal. I am grateful to them for this understanding, and for the support they have given to Government's approach.

In the circumstances, restraint combined with firmness is called for. These must continue to determine our policy. Above all, we wish to assist in bringing about an atmosphere which is free of communal tension and conducive to the efforts of the Sri Lankan leaders of all communities to achieve a lasting political settlement. We hope both sides will take concrete steps towards that end. This is what I want my Envoy to pursue with President Jayewardene and others concerned.

The Sri Lankan Tangle*

Sir, my colleague, Shri Mirdha, will reply to the debate. If I rise now, it is to share my growing concern at what seems to be a deteriorating situation in Sri Lanka.

Hon. Members know and they have referred to the various incidents and events which have taken place since we last debated this matter. It has been discussed several times before. They have referred to the extensive shelling by the Sri Lankan Navy and what happened in Mannar and other places such as Velvettiturai and the killings of many innocent people. In fact, the latest news is that more people of Indian origin have been killed.

Originally I thought of making only some general remarks, but certain points have been raised on which I should like to say a few words.

I want to congratulate Prof. Dandavate, who made a learned and informative speech as is expected from him. He told us about the origin of the trouble which is of long standing. Various points of view have been expressed here. Although our friend who spoke just now, I think Jagpal Singh Ji...(*Interruptions*) made a sensible speech and took a national points of view. However, he said that we were not doing anything. This is not a fact. Some people have said–I am sorry that I was not present when Shri Subramaniam Swamy made most of his speech, I heard only the tail end he spoke of interference and said it was only a question of degree. This is not so. If we sent anybody to Sri Lanka, it has been with the concurrence of the President and the Government of Sri Lanka. We did not announce that we would send somebody whether they wanted it or not. If I have telephoned or written, that is a normal way of keeping in touch with Heads of other governments and States and I have done so even when the matter did not concern India directly. I consult leaders of many countries whenever the occasion so demands. I have been in touch with President Jayewardene and written or spoken to him whenever a specially disturbing event has taken place. Another point needs to be clarified. An hon. Member spoke of Soviet interference at the time of Bangladesh. Our agreement with the Soviet Union is not at all a military agreement, it is purely a treaty of peace and friendship. So, except that it was a moral booster at that particular time when nation was feeling a bit low, otherwise it was not connected with events in Bangladesh or the subsequent outcome.

We are deeply concerned about the induction of Mossad in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lanka Government have compared this with our having an Israeli Consulate in Bombay. The two

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* Participating in a discussion under Rule 193 regarding the Situation in Sri Lanka. *L.S. Deb.*, 25 August, 1984, cc. 156-66.

issues are not at all at par; there is no comparison between the two. This particulater Consulate was set up in the fifties, intended only to provide visa facilities to Indian Jews, many of whom live in Bombay or Cochin and that area. Now we do not even have a Consul in Bombay. Sri Lanka, on the other hand, is virtually forging a security relationship with Israel. These two are very different situations. President Jayewardene told a News Conference that he would seek help "from the devil himself" if necessary. The ostensible rationalisation given for their decision by President Jayewardene is that he has not been able to obtain anti-terrorist assistance from other countries. This explanation is rather intriguing to us because we do know, and this has been confirmed by the British Government, that British experts have been providing anti-terrorist training to the Sri Lankan police since October last. They are attached to the Police Academy at Kalutare in the western province and have been helping to raise a special Commando unit there. Similar help may also be forthcoming from other countries.

With regard to the plane, it was a chartered one from the East African Airlines, but who chartered it and who or what came on it, we do not know. Anybody can charter a plane and use it. However, in the present circumstances, it is intriguing.

I do not want to blame them if they are not involved, at the same time, I have no information to the contrary.*

In one of today's newspapers I see a report that the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Shri Premadasa, has produced an Indian journal, INDIA 2,000 in his Parliament, which sets out an alleged Indian plan to invade the Island State last September. I refute this false allegation strongly. It is utterly irresponsible for people in the authority to behave like this. There was no such plan. And, although I do not like to disappoint my friend opposite, we have no such plan for the future either.

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We have written or otherwise approached many leaders of other countries, Heads of Governments, on events in Sri Lanka to express our grave concern at developments there and how the violence and crime are escalating. You have all heard that 500 young people were taken away. Their parents were told that they would be returned very soon. Out of these, I believe only 100 have come back. But subsequently, about 150 or so others have been taken away, and nobody knows where they are.

When we heard that other countries were approached for military and other assistance to put down what was the Sri Lankans call Tamil terrorism, we conveyed our viewpoints that it would pose dangers to our security to have foreign forces so closeby. We wondered also whether these countries understood the basic nature of the problem and whether they would like to get involved in the manner in which we had heard they were being asked to do.

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* Responding to Dr. Subramaniam Swamy's intervention, "Ambarasu knows it is of South Africa".

The size of a country has nothing to do with its sovereignty. Somebody has spoken of being Big Brother. We do not believe in this theory. We do not think in terms of big or small brothers. We believe in the equality of all nations. In the non– aligned movement, even though India is the Chairperson, our attitude has been not to flaunt our leadership there, or to press our views on others. We try to work in partnership. That may have certain weaknesses but, on the other hand it has also its advantages, because one gets greater co-operation. The whole question of Big Brother irritates our smaller neighbours and also certain countries which may not be so never. Some Indians refer to special cultural relations and so on. This may boost our pride, but it is not welcome in the countries concerned.

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Either Big Sister, or Big Brother*. It makes no difference. When we say we are equal, it can be equality amongst sisters and equality amongst brothers, just as you like.

Every country has its national interest at heart and would not like to brook any interference from outside, as indeed we ourselves would not like such interference from outside in our country. When we speak to Sri Lanka, we speak as a friend and neighbour who is deeply concerned.

A question was asked about previous agreements. We had agreed to take 6 lakh people. Out of that, 510,000 applied by the last date, which was 30th October, 1981. All these have either been registered, or their registration is being processed.

President Jayewardene has agreed to give Sri Lankan citizenship to this balance of about 93,000, But.Sir, Sri Lanka, which had agreed to accept 3,75,000 people has so far to this date *i.e.* up to 31st January, 1984, given citizenship only to 1,90,000. The balance is their responsibility. The 93,000 to which they have now agreed is in addition to the others.

As I said earlier, we are doing everything possible to bring people to the negotiating table. That is the only way by which a peaceful solution can be found.

As regards the children and various other matters as I said earlier not only the Foreign Office; but I personally have spoken to the Sri Lankan High Commissioner here about the fate of the children, the young people there and have also written to President Jayewardene on this matter.

Now, the question before us is whether this issue is one merely of terrorism and law and order, as the Sri Lankan authorities claim, and which is the point which President Jayewardene made in his last letter to me? In our judgement the problem goes much beyond this. It has grown to such dimension, not only because of the cumulative frustrations, but also because of the persistent and increasing violence and attacks on the Tamils in Sri Lanka. You know how many have been killed and how much of their property has been destroyed. Today they all live in great danger. They are daily subjected to torture, discrimination, indignity and terror.

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* Replying to Dr. Subramaniam Swamy's question, "What about big sister" ?

The continuing violation of the basic human rights of the Tamil population has evoked deep concern here. We have drawn the attention of the appropriate international agencies to these violations. We have voiced our grave anxiety in the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and in the Human Rights Commission. Earlier on, we have sent financial help through the League of Red Cross Societies. It has also evoked worldwide concern. One hon. Member spoke about the concern of some Western countries which are giving Sri Lanka financial and other aid. They are examining the situation and are worried.

The problem there is indeed a very complex one. The majority of the Tamils are in the North where it is sought to oppress them. Then there are Tamils in the Eastern Province, where the majority community of the whole of Sri Lanka *i.e.* those of Sinhalese origin, have been inducted and settled there so as to reduce the strength of the Tamils there. And finally there are those who are called Tamils of Indian origin. Of course, you have rightly pointed out that they all are originally of Indian origin, but now I am not talking of those who went long long ago but of those who were taken by the British about a hundred years ago. They are the ones who are normally referred to as Tamils of Indian origin. These are scattered in and around Colombo, on the Highlands and other parts of Sri Lanka.

Sir, some elements may be interested in aggravating the situation so that there is excuse for intervention from outside. We have to be very careful about this. We are keeping the situation under close watch. But we do not wish to say or do anything that might worsen the situation and make the problem more acute for the Tamils. On the other hand, we have to be alert about the activities of foreign agencies. The Island is very close to us, only about twelve miles away. Obviously we can not remain unconcerned. It is not at all the same as some of the other instances that were pointed out. This is not the occasion to discuss the presence of the Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Our view is quite clear. We do not approve of foreign troops or any type of interference and we have made this clear to all concerned. The Sri Lankan problem is entirely different. We are interested in ending the repression on, and the killing of, the Tamil population there.

And this will only happen, this stage can only be reached when there are serious negotiation for a viable political settlement which is acceptable to all concerned.

Whenever we say that India should advise or make itself felt, it does not help the ethnic minority because it irritates the majority community, which retaliates on the Tamils. Therefore, even when we talk to the President or his representative, our attitude is one of how to get them to propose something that will be acceptable to the Tamils as well as all the other communities. (*Interruptions*). The President made certain proposals. He also had certain ideas which he said he might propose, depending on the atmosphere and on what other parties say. He said, 'I have to win over the other people'. Whatever it was, as you know, he first mentioned the Second Chamber, which was unacceptable to the TULF. The other day in a press interview, President Jayewardene was reported to have stated that the Sri Lankan Government was willing to consider Provincial Councils as units of devolution for the entire country. While the District Councils will remain to begin with, over a period of time there would be Provincial Councils to which Ministers can be answerable. The

formation of the Provincial Councils will be an organic part of the second Chamber. This seems to be an improvement on the proposals which were outlined by the President at the All Parties, Conference on July 23rd. I might mention that the minority parties and groups including Tamils, Muslims and Christians–these Muslims and Chritians are also Tamils, but I am only separating them because....

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Well not religion-wise*, but initially the Sri Lankan Government was regarding the Muslims as separate and telling us that they were not supporting the movement. That is the only reason why I am mentioning them separately, I don't want to divide them up into religious groups. But Muslims have also been killed, their properties have also been destroyed and they also feel aggrieved. So, these minority groups as well as, I believe, some other political parties including the Communist Party of Sri Lanka have advocated the setting up of Provincial Councils. Recently the Sri Lankan Freedom Party is also said to have supported the proposal. So it is our hope that these ideas will be fully discussed at the All Parties Conference scheduled to be reconvened on the 29th or whenever it meets and a viable political solution worked out.

As most Members have indicated, this is a matter of concern not only to our sisters and brothers of Tamil Nadu, but to the entire nation. It is our hope that a place of honour and security for the Tamil population can be found within a united Sri Lanka through the democratic process of negotiations. It was for this that we had offered our good offices as a friendly neighbour. Recently, President Jayewardene has conveyed a message that he would like Shri Parthasarathy to visit Sri Lanka again at an appropriate time. Our good offices are available to the Sri Lankan Government and we shall continue in our efforts in every possible way to seek an early end to the ordeal which the Tamil people there are suffering.

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It has been strongly condemned by the Government**. That is the whole of what I have been telling you that we have condemned it. We have written to other Heads of States to condemn it. We have taken it up in the Human Rights Commission.

I do not know whether that word was used***. The killing, the massacre of the Tamilians, these are some of the words which have been used earlier, Whether in letters I have written 'genocide' I do not now remember. I can look that up. But when I say that people are being massacred and whole populations are being sought to be annihilated, I think it means the same thing.

Initially I had offered to send medicines, food, anything that was needed either for the refugee camps or other places. At that time we were told that everything needed was

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* Clarifying the point raised by Dr. Subramaniam Swamy, "Because of religion" ?

** Responding to Shri K. Mayathevar's observation that genocide had not been condemned.

*** Responding to Dr. Subramaniam Swamy's question, "Are you calling it a genocide ?"

available. At that time they did not allow the Red Cross. But later we have been helping. We have given Rs. 60 lakhs on Government to Government basis and Rs. 54 lakhs through the Indian Red Cross. But naturally if more is needed, it can be considered even though we are not flush with funds. We shall certainly help in whatever way we can.

The Red Cross itself does not go in. The Red Cross goes only in a war situation. But the League of Red Cross Societies helps in such situations.

Execution of Africans in Southern Rhodesia*

Sir, I wanted to draw the attention of the House to an event elsewhere in Africa, in that part of the Continent which is still disfigured by racism. We have learnt with inexpressible sorrow that the South Rhodesian regime has perpetrated a heinous crime by executing three Africans. The world has followed their fate with great anxiety in the last few days. This monstrous deed of the white racist regime evokes our wrath and our condemnation. I am sure everyone in the House and the country will condemn this barbarous act and honour the name of the three African martyrs: James Dhlamini, Victor Mhlambo and Duly Shadreck.

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I think the sense of the House is that the House should stand in silence for one minute.

* Statement regarding 'Execution of Africans by Southern Rhodesian Government', *L.S. Deb.*, 6 March, 1968, cc. 2045-47.

Execution of African Patriots in Southern Rhodesia*

Sir, the news came to us after this hon. House had risen last evening.Therefore, I was able to make the statement in the other House but not here. Sir, this House has no doubt followed with horror the barbarous and inhuman act perpetrated yesterday in that part of the African Continent in which the dark forces of racial discrimination continue to disfigure and debase human life.

The illegal regime in Southern Rhodesia has committed a grave and heinous crime against humanity by executing three African patriots. The world has followed their fate with great anxiety in the last few days. This monstrous deed on the part of the White racist regime naturally evokes the anger and indignation of the entire Indian people. No word can be strong enough to condemn this despicable action. Sir, I am sure everyone in the House and the country will join me in severely condemning this monstrosity and also in paying homage to the memory of the three brave martyrs, Victor Siferani Malambo, James David Dhlamini, and Duly Shahreck. Sir, if you and the hon. House agree we night stand up for a minute in silence as a mark of respect to the memory of these martyrs.

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Sir, I have already expressed in no uncertain terms how I personally and how the Government feels in regard to this matter. Therefore it is clear to the hon. Members that the Government shares their feeling regarding this dastardly act of the illegal Government of Southern Rhodesia. I have had some personal knowledge also because, when I was in Salisbury some years ago, the ten British Government representatives came to see me, the whites were allowed but all the African leaders who were coming to see me were arrested at the gate of the Airport only for the duration of my stay at the Airport. They were released after my plane had taken off. So, we have been in touch with them at many levels. We are fully aware of the grave dangers of racialism and of the racial policy which is being followed in South Africa and in Southern Rhodesia.

But I want to protest very strongly against some of the words uttered by the hon. Member, Shri Niren Ghosh, when he tried to put the blame for this on the Government of India... (*Interruptions*). Ever since the Government has come into power it has strongly and consistently taken up this matter at the United Nations and in all international bodies, at all meetings with Heads of States and other leaders, whether from Africa or other parts

* Statement regarding execution of three African patriots by the illegal regime in Southern Rhodesia, *R.S. Deb.*, 7 March, 1968, cc. 3646-47, 3654–56.

of the world. Even before independence we were in touch with the African leaders and supporting their cause, for which they have expressed their appreciation many a time.

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Sir, it is true that had the government of the U.K. taken stronger steps, they could have prevented this tragic happening. The Government of India have been talking to them about this matter and expressing their views very strongly.

Now about one or two points, I must say that although we stand for a policy of peace, at no time has this meant giving in to force or yielding to pressure of any kind. Whether we use the word 'Ahimsa' or 'Shanti', it is not out of fear or because of pressure from any quarter. We have always stood up against oppression, against injustice of every kind. So, that question does not come in. But the question does come in as to what action is proper and what action will yield results. Hon. Members, for instance, have referred to the question of the Commonwealth. Now the Commonwealth does not consist merely of white people. The majority of the countries there in fact are not countries of white people; they are Asians and Africans. Therefore, this matter should be considered from that aspect.

With regard to military aid also, India has supported the view that the matter may have to be dealt with by helping the freedom fighters militarily but in what way this should be done, it is not possible for me to say here.

Independence of Mauritius*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am sure the House will join me in greeting the advent of freedom in Mauritius and in warmly welcoming independent Mauritius to the comity of nations. As the House is aware, a delegation led by my colleague, the Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. Bhagat, is in Mauritius at the moment rejoicing with its free people and sharing their sense of fulfilment at this long awaited liberation from colonial rule.

Sir, we wish the people of Mauritius all success in the endeavour upon which they will now embark as a free people to develop their multi-racial society and to further their socio-economic progress. We look forward to preserving and promoting goodwill and understanding between our two peoples and to growing mutual co-operation in the sphere of socio-economic development.

May I request you, Sir, on behalf of this House and the people of India to convey to the Government and people of Mauritius our sincere good wishes on this joyous occasion?

* Statement regarding the attainment of independence by Mauritius, *R.S. Deb.*, 12 March, 1968, cc. 4298-99.

India and Disarmament*

On the 7th March, 1968, the U.S.A., the Soviet Union and the U.K. presented to the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee, Geneva, a draft resolution on security assurances, which they are prepared to sponsor in the Security Council. The text of this draft is laid on the Table. The sponsors are willing to back this draft with unilateral declarations to the effect that they will seek immediate Security Council action to provide assistance in accordance with the U.N. Charter, if a non-nuclear State which is party to the Treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons becomes the victim of an act of aggression, or an object of the threat of aggression in which nuclear weapons are used. They will also reaffirm the right which is recognized under Article 51 of the U.N. Charter, of individual and collective self-defence until the Security Council takes action.

The E.N.D.C. will shortly send a report on its work concerning the draft Treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons to the General Assembly. The two sponsors *viz.* the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. have further revised the draft Treaty in one or two minor respects of a procedural character. This draft Treaty, together with the draft resolution on security assurances, will now be forwarded to the General Assembly of the U.N. for further consideration. It is understood that the General Assembly is likely to reconvene sometime next month to consider this matter.

I should like to place before hon. Members certain broad considerations governing our position. Naturally, we welcome the steps taken by nuclear weapon States in consort with non–nuclear weapon States to make more effective the role of the United Nations for peace–keeping and for providing effective security. The hopes of mankind rest on this. The obligation cast by the Charter on Member States, and more particularly on the permanent members of the Security Council, makes it necessary for them to discharge their obligations to ensure peace in the world. This should not be contingent on the conclusion of the Non-proliferation Treaty. Such an atmosphere of conscientious and conscious effort in the interest of peace would, we sincerely feel, be an effective factor in inhibiting the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons. From this point of view, a security guarantee cannot be made a *quid pro quo* for signing the Non-proliferation Treaty in its present form.

We believe in the validity of a step by step approach and do realise that it is not possible for a perfect treaty to emerge immediately. However, it is reasonable to expect

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* Statement regarding draft resolution to Disarmament Committee, Geneva, on Security Assurances, *R.S. Deb*, 14 March, 1968, cc. 4736-37 and 44.

the Eighteen–Nation Disarmament Commission, which was designed to devise measures for disarmament, to come forward with some concrete step, even though small, in this direction. The present draft Treaty does not promote disarmament. And as long as the elaboration of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapons powers continues unchecked, it does not advance the security of the world. Measures which do not involve an element of self–restraint on the part of all States–nuclear weapons States as well as non-nuclear weapons States cannot form the basis for a meaningful international agreement to promote disarmament. India has repeatedly announced that it is not making an atom bomb and that she is developing her atomic energy programme exclusively for peaceful purposes. This position is based on a national evaluation of all aspects of the problem, including that of security.

*** *** ***

I am glad that on the whole there is great understanding on both sides of the House. One question was asked about Government's view on disarmament . I am a little surprised by this, because our view has been clarified and the role we have played in the Disarmament Conference is also before the House and the country. We believe in total disarmament and India is taking every possible step in consultation with other countries to see that such a stage is reached. We do not feel that this particular Treaty is serving that cause. I think some hon. Members have already said that the present draft Treaty will give nuclear monopoly to certain nations. Not only the two nations mentioned but under this Treaty all nuclear–weapon powers do get certain advantages, thus creating a kind of class of haves and a class of have nots. That is one of our main objections to the Treaty.

With regard to consultations, I am always happy to consult Members of the Opposition and all the hon. Members of the House. There was notice given in the other House and I felt that if I did not make a similar statement here the hon. Members would not be happy.

Czech–Soviet Dispute and India*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, as the House is aware a new leadership assumed office in Czechoslovakia some months ago. They made known their desire to make certain changes in the internal structure and policies of their country. This apparently created certain misapprehensions amongst some of their fellow members of the Warsaw Pact Organization. There was an exchange of correspondence between the five countries of the Warsaw Pact after their recent meeting in Warsaw, and the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. The press has carried detailed reports of this correspondence. Following these exchanges, a meeting between the representatives of the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia was arranged and the leaders of these two parties are at present engaged in talks in Czechoslovakia. The outcome of these bilateral discussions is yet to be known. The Government of India do not consider it desirable to express views on the merits of the issues currently being discussed. In view of the sensitiveness of the situation, any comment may accentuate the difficulties rather than make a useful contribution. Bearing these considerations in mind, most Governments have exercised restraint.

It is our earnest hope that matters pertaining to the policies of Czechoslovakia and to her relations with her neighbours will be resolved amicably. We also hope that the processes of detente in Europe will continue.

*** *** ***

As I have said the two countries are having talks.** Talks have not broken down. In fact, the latest news is that the Chairman of the National Assembly who is said to be also in favour of reform has said that the atmosphere is optimistic and that the talks are, I think, the word he used was promising. In this situation, it would not be wise for us to express any opinion. As the situation develops, certainly one can decide what stand one should take. As far as the question of non- interference is concerned, I think, we have expressed our views very clearly. Even with respect of Czechoslovakia–I was asked 2 or 3 days ago about this matter- I said that our views are the same.

*** *** ***

* Replying to a Calling Attention regarding the Czech-Soviet dispute and the efforts made by the Government of India in regard thereto, *L.S. Deb.*, 1 August, 1968, cc. 3478-94.

** Replying to the points raised by Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta.

We do not believe in interference from outside.* But here the two countries are talking and they are trying to settle the thing through talks.

*** *** ***

The next part was whether we have kept ourselves in contact with various people. I have not written letters. But we are, through diplomatic channels, in constant contact with the representatives of all these countries. The third question was about like-minded people. I do not think this is a time to have such a meeting.

*** *** ***

I am sure you** will not expect me to know or announce the extent of soviet military strength. With regard to reports from our Ambassadors, certainly we are receiving reports, but I do not think I can place them on the Table of the House.... (*Interruptions*).

*** *** ***

Mr. Speaker, Sir, at present the question is not whether we have sympathy for this side or that side. When we confront a serious and delicate situation then it is the duty of the Government not to take a step which deteriorates the situation further. We have not drifted from our policy at all.†....

*** *** ***

I am not saying this at all.*** This is a country which has close ties with India. It is not far off from us, rather it is much more closer than many other countries. We had traditional relations in the past and even now we are close to each other.†

I was reminded about an incident which took place 30 years ago. Perhaps hon. Members might remember that at that time I was there and had an opportunity to meet all the leaders and the people. My personal relations with Czechoslovakia have been very deep and close since my childhood. But as I have pointed out one should first understand the seriousness of a situation and then react; we have already acquainted them with and views.†

As regards writing to them, Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, there are so many Governments and regimes but none has done this from the government side. Some countries which have reacted–their relations are of a different nature.†

*** *** ***

I would say that this is not the time when we should do something. We have to watch, what happens there. I take it for granted that the leaders and the people of Czechoslovakia understand very well what is in their interest and they are handling the situation well.†

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* Responding to Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta's question: "What are your views? That is my specific question."

** Replying to Shri Piloo Mody's remarks: "She has to answer two questions. One is whether they have received reports from our diplomats and the second is the extent of Soviet military might in Czechoslovakia."

† Translated from Hindi.

*** Replying to Shri M.L. Sondhi's remarks: "Chamberlain also said that it was a far off country. She is directly following Chamberlain."

India does stand and will always continue to stand for justice, liberty and that peace. There is no question about that.*

*** *** ***

I am glad to see this new found friendship for Czechoslovakia on the other side, and if I may say so, I think it will greatly embarrass the Czechoslovak leaders and people.**

*** *** ***

We are close enough to the Czechoslovak people and leaders for them to understand exactly where we stand.

*** *** ***

Our attitude always has been friendly towards them. Surely, you*** do not want that to change.

It is a question of jugement and assessment of what helps in a particular situation and what does not help, and it is our assessment that at this moment it will not help to express specific views on this matter. As far as our views on democracy and on greater liberalisation are concerned, there is absolutely no doubt that we have stood for these things in all parts of the world, and we do not change our attitude towards these in this case either. As I said, I am sure the Czechoslovak leaders and people fully appreciate our point of view in this.

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* Responding to Shri Samar Guha's question: "I want to know from the Prime Minister whether as the representative of one nation which in its Constitution had enshrined the words "Equality, Democracy and Freedom," this Government will categorically welcome the wind of liberalisation and democratisation that is taking place in the polity of Czechoslovakia?"

** Reacting to Shri Piloo Mody's remark: "Except in Czechoslovakia."

*** Referring to Shri Piloo Mody.

India's Stand on the Crisis in Czechoslovakia*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is with a heavy heart and with a profound sense of concern that I have to report to this House certain events which are currently taking place in Czechoslovakia.

We have always been deeply committed to the cause of freedom everywhere. We have stood for certain principles as guiding and informing our attitude to international events. The principle of non-interference by one country in the internal affairs of another constitutes the very basis of peaceful co-existence. We have always believed that international relations should be governed by respect for the sovereignty and independence of nations, big or small. We have always stood for the right of every country to develop its personality according to its own traditions aptitudes and genius. India has always raised her voice whenever these principles have been violated.

*** *** ***

Sir, the House is aware of the reports which have come through the world Press and radio as to the nature of the developments which have taken place in Czechoslovakia. We have also made enquiries from the diplomatic missions of the countries concerned as well as others and continue to be in close touch with them. The armed forces of the Soviet Union and four of its Warsaw Pact allies began crossing the Czechoslovak borders at about 03.30 hours IST. They are now reported to be in Prague and other towns of Czechoslovakia.

In the early hours of this morning, the Soviet Government, through their Charged' Affairs in New Delhi, informed us that the Governments of the Soviet Union and four of its Allied countries of the Warsaw Pact had decided to send their armed forces into Czechoslovakia. Hon. Members have presumably seen the statement which had since been put out by the Soviet news agency, Tass, stating the view point of the Soviet Government

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Although it was only after our own independence that we were able to establish diplomatic relations with the republic of Czechoslovakia, we have a long history of friendship towards Czechoslovakia and its valiant people. I recall, as I am sure many of my colleagues on both sides of the House will remember, the tragic and fateful events of

* Statement on the situation in Czechoslovakia, *L.S. Deb.*, 21 August, 1968, cc. 3444-51.

1938 and 1939. Even then our sympathies were with the people of Czechoslovakia in their travail and my father gave poignant expression to them. I am sure that the House will join me in conveying to the people of Czechoslovakia the profound concern at the turn which events have taken so soon after what appeared to be a peaceful resolution of problems and differences between Czechoslovakia and its allies.

Our relations with the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria are close, and many-sided. We value these friendships and wish to preserve and extend them. However, we cannot but give expression to our anguish at the events in Czechoslovakia. This House will no doubt wish to convey to them our view that they should carefully consider all aspects of the situation which has arisen as a result of the action by their armed forces and its possible consequences.

We are deeply aware of the fears which have gripped Europe, and the conflicts which have raged there leading to two world wars. These fears still haunt the minds of the European people .

I am sure I reflect the opinion of the House when I express the hope that the forces which have entered Czechoslovakia will be withdrawn at the earliest possible moment and the Czech people will be able to determine their future according to their own wishes and interests, and that whatever mutual problems there may be between Czechoslovakia and its allies, will be settled peacefully. The right of nations to live peacefully and without outside interference should not be denied in the name of religion or ideology.

*** *** ***

*Mr. Speaker, Sir, when I rose to make the statement in this House yesterday on the situation in Czechoslovakia, I said that I was doing so with a heavy heart and with a profound sense of concern. I chose my words with deliberation and with a great deal of thought.

There are moments in history when grave responsibilities are cast on Government in whatever they say or do. This is one such moment. The dictates of wisdom enjoin upon us to tread carefully and with great circumspection and, when we are in front of an avalanche, not to make too much noise which-my hon. friends who have done any mountaineering will know-increases the force of an avalanche. I say this not to engage in metaphor but to try to convey to the House the real gravity of the situation. It is easy to give vent to one's feelings and it is easy enough to condemn. But, Mr. Speaker. let me say that I am not insensitive to the views expressed by the Hon. Members. As I have said on a previous occasion, I myself have had the closest connections and personal friendship with Czechoslovakia and her people. So I myself do feel very strongly on these matters, not only as a Government but also, if I may say so, as a person. But after we have given expression to our feelings the political realities remain and Government has to deal with them.

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* Replying to the debate on a Motion on the Prime Minister's Statement regarding the Situation in Czechoslovakia, *L.S. Deb.*, 22 August, 1968, cc. 459-65.

Yesterday, I voiced our feelings in which, I am sure, the sentiments of this House were also included, for the Government and the people of Czechoslovakia. I expressed the hope that it would be possible to restore the normal and legally constituted Government of Czechoslovakia. We earnestly hope that even now it would be possible for this to happen. We earnestly hope that it may still be possible to resolve the differences by the conflict of argument, discussion and debate, not by force. Only that way can there be any durable settlement. This again is the view that the Government has held on all similar problems that these political differences, political conflicts, cannot be resolved by means of force.

Here, I would like to express my deep concern for the safety and welfare of the Czech Government and the party leaders and I am sure, the House will join me in this.

We are specially concerned with what has been happening because over the years we have been working in the lessening of tensions and we have been working for the softening of the cold war atmosphere. This action of armed forces entering Czechoslovakia has, with one blow, reversed the situation. It has immediately taken us back, over the years, as if all this long work of bringing people together or getting them together or getting them find peaceful solution has been overnight wiped out.

Naturally it is of concern to us and we feel that it is of concern for peace in the world. Hon. Members have urged upon the Government to play a role at the U.N. We ourselves are anxious to do so. Our country has the honour to be a member of the Security Council. Under the UN Charter, the Security Council is the sole forum for the consideration of Security matters. I wonder if it would be right for a Government which is a member of the Security Council to statutes is position on the issues which are going to be discussed....(*Interruption*). We should not do anything which might prejudice our role in the Security Council....(*Interruption*).

*** *** ***

I think hon. Members are deliberately trying to give slants to my statement. They have sought to prove that I have not spoken out on the side of Czechoslovakia, or perhaps that I have not spoken out strongly enough. Does courage lie merely in words? Venerable Acharyaji reminded us of Gandhiji. Gandhiji did not often use strong words. But he did teach us to act fearlessly and firmly, and in our reaction to what has happened in Czechoslovakia, I do not think we have been timid or that we have hesitated. We have very firmly stated....

*** *** ***

I should like to assure the House that we shall always uphold the United Nations' Charter on which rests the hope of mankind for a peaceful world. This we have always done, this we shall always do, and we shall work to ensure that the Charter rights of Czechoslovakia are safeguarded in every way. This obviously depends on how the matter comes up there. I can assure this House that just as we are interested as a member of the Security Council and as a member of the United Nations Organisation in upholding the sacred principles of the Charter, we are equally wedded to certain basic and fundamental

principles to which we have adhered all these years, and I would like–with the permission of the House, to restate them.

*We (India) ardently and sincerely believe that every State should be left free and unfettered to decide its own future and its own destiny. We believe that there should be no....(Interruption) external interference in the affairs of any country. Thirdly force should not be used as the arbiter of decisions, and finally the differences in ideology or social systems can never be an excuse for interfering in one another's internal affairs.** These are no new principles. All who have followed the course of India's conduct of international relations in difficult and varied circumstances will admit that these principles have provided the very foundations of our foreign policy. It is in the light of these principles that we have judged, and shall continue to judge, situations as they arise.

*** *** ***

I would like to compare the present situation to an avalanche because I know that hereafter the world will either get over this crisis honourably and peacefully and go forward with the process of *detente* and relaxation or we shall revert to the terrible confrontation which had rocked, and nearly wrecked, this world after the end of the Second World War.

I spoke earlier of the work we have done in the lessening of tensions. Now, we had a vested interest in this. Our country, as all developing countries, needs peace for its very development, its very existence. It was, therefore, with hope and confidence that we had watched the vast movement in many countries towards a better and more harmonious world order. It is our hope that the present crisis will not reverse the trend. In the present situation, the immediate need, as I had said yesterday, is for the withdrawal of the forces which have entered Czechoslovakia so that the Czechoslovak people may be free to determine their own future for themselves without any intervention and in an atmosphere which is free from tension. Whatever problems there may be between Czechoslovakia and its neighbours should be settled peacefully by means of negotiations and not through the use of force. The processes of peaceful co-existence which we have tried to promote for so many years must be allowed to develop unimpeded.

We were asked here about whether we had conveyed our views to the Czech. Ambassador. We have conveyed our views. The Ambassador is unfortunately, not here he is in Czechoslovalia. But we have conveyed our views very clearly to the *Charge d' Affairs* who is here, to the *Charge d' Affairs* of the USSR and to the Ambassadors of the other Warsaw Pact countries. We are in touch with the Ambassadors of other nations also.

We are second to none in our sympathy for the brave and valiant Czech. people. We are second to none in our admiration for the dignity and calm with which they are facing the tragic situation, and we are specially aware that the method they have chosen is the method of *satyagraha.*

Just before I spoke, an hon. Member** asked about clash of personalities in the USSR, clash of personalities in Czechoslovakia, something about workers *versus* intelligentsia in

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* Emphasis added by Editor.

** Shri Swell.

Czechoslovakia. We are, as I said, earlier, in touch with the various embassies,though we are not directly in touch with our own Embassy in Czechoslovakia. But there is no authoritative news about the various rumours that are afloat, except that sometime ago, not within the last few days, a letter or a communication did appear in the *Pravda* newspaper signed by 90 workers of, I think the automobile industry–I am not quite sure which industry it was–in which they had said something about needing help to save socialism.

*** *** ***

Whatever it was. This is the only indication that we have of any such views. It is quite possible, however, and it is probable also, that there is some kind of difference of opinion within two groups; but whatever the difference of opinion, it is their business to solve it themselves. I have said this before and I reiterate it.

*** *** ***

The situation is extremely grave. We want that we should be in a position where we can really play our role at the United Nations. We have made our views very clear, without changing words. We have talked about Russian armies going there.... (*Interruptions*)

*** *** ***

When we say that the forces should withdraw. I think that our views are very clear.... (*Interruptions*)

*** *** ***

I should like to say only this. Many hon. Members have said that this is not a party matter; this is a matter with which the whole nation is concerned. With what are we concerned? We are concerned with the safety of the Czech. leaders. We are concerned with the Sovereignty and independence of Czechoslokia. We are concerned with the withdrawal of the forces.... (*Interruptions*). I have already said that we would support the Charter rights of Czechoslovakia in the United Nations. So, I should say: let us combine on this matter and not quarrel over the use of a word here or there. Let me conclude expressing once more our sympathy and admiration for the people of Czechoslovakia.

*** *** ***

*Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, yesterday and day before yesterday, I explained what a very serious situation had arisen. (*Interruptions*) I hope the hon. Members will forgive me if I say that they are not exhibiting much seriousness here....(*Interruptions*).

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* Statement regarding the U.N. Security Council Resolution relating to Czechoslovakia, *L.S. Deb.*, 23 August, 1968, cc. 888-94.

We have heard very moving speeches here. We have been reminded of our Independence movement. There may be some people here who are too young to remember the Independence movement. There are many others who are older but who did not take part in the Independence movement. I belong to neither category. I was there in the thick of the Independence movement. (*Interruptions*).

*** *** ***

I believe that some Members have tried to point out that I have not stood by what I had said in this House yesterday or the day before. I believe somebody has already read out this Resolution. But with your permission, I would like to read it out again.

Recalling that the United Nations is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members—

we fully support this—

Considering that the action taken by the Government of the USSR and certain other members of the Warsaw Pact in invading the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is a violation of the United Nations Charter, and in "particular, of the principle that all Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State—

We have asked our Permanent Representative to support this and he has also fully supported this. If I may interject and say so, I was the first person to mention these points publicly in my statement here before anybody else had done so (*Interruptions*):

"gravely concerned that, as announced by the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia the troops of the Soviet Union and certain other members of the Warsaw Pact had entered their country without the knowledge and against the wishes of the Czechoslovakian Government. This clause also we have fully supported.

Affirms that the people of the sovereign State of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic have the right in accordance with the Charter freely to exercise their own self-determination and to arrange their own affairs without external interventions.

That also we have supported.

Affirms that the sovereignty, political independence and the territorial integrity of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic must be fully respected.

This also we have supported.

Condemns armed intervention of the USSR and certain other armed Members of the Warsaw Pact in the internal affairs of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and calls upon them forthwith to withdraw their forces and to cease all other forms of intervention in Czechslovakia's internal affairs.

Now, with regard to this para, we did not wish to support it .

*** *** ***

As I have said in my statements yesterday we supported the para which "calls upon them forthwith to withdraw their forces and to cease all other forms of intervention in Czechoslovakia's internal affairs". We have supported.

*** *** ***

We have earlier stated our position on some of these matters and our basic principles on the use of words such as 'condemn' or 'condemnation'.* We do not believe that the use of such words necessarily goes to help the Czechoslovak people....(*Interruptions*)

*** *** ***

We received a phone message this morning informing us about this resolution and asking for our advice. We immediately consulted with our colleagues.

*** *** ***

We considered the matter in a Cabinet meeting, and we felt that while we should stand firm on the principles, as I said, the use of this word did not in anyway help the Czechoslovak people or serve any useful or constructive purpose, and therefore, (*Interruptions*)–we suggested that they might change this word into "deplore".

*** *** ***

Our representative, therefore, asked firstly that there should be a para–by–para voting which would have permitted us to vote for all the other issues except for this particular sentence. He also asked for the change of this particular word, from "condemn" to "deplore". Thirdly, he asked for time to consult us because, even though we had the phone call, we had barely a few minutes at our disposal as voting had already begun; and he, and I believe some other Members also, asked whether there could be a slight postponement so that they could consult their Governments.

*** *** ***

I wonder if it is the hon. Member's** contention that by by-passing the resolution we have changed anything that has happened in Czechoslovakia.

We are mourning*** (*Interruptions*).

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* Replying to Shri Hem Barua's remarks, "condemns" is the essential part of the resolution; that has not been supported."

** Responding to Shri M.R. Masani's remark, "While the Czechs were being butchered".

*** Replying to Shri Ranga's remark, "We need not mourn at all when somebody is dead."

The resolution goes on:

Calls upon them likewise to refrain from any acts of bloodshed or other actions in Czechoslovakia and elsewhere that could exacerbate the situation, and to take no action of terror or reprisal that could result in further suffering or loss of life.

Calls upon the President of the United Nations to exercise their diplomatic influence upon the USSR and the other countries concerned with a view to bringing about prompt implementation of this resolution.

Requests the Secretary-General to transmit this resolution to the countries concerned to keep the situation under constant review and report to the Council.

*** *** ***

We have unfortunately not received the details.* We gave instructions that our support of all these paras should be made in very clear, firm and unequivocal terms.

*** *** ***

**Mr. Speaker, Sir, during the last three days, in one form or another, in this House and the other House and indeed all over the country and in large parts of the world, people have followed the tragic events in Czechoslovakia with profound concern, anxiety and anguish. The House has followed the reports which have come through the world press and radio and during the last 24 hours there have been reports of violence, of bloodshed, of loss of precious lives, and there have also been rumours about the Czech. leaders. All these reports have naturally heightened our concern.

I believe several Members here asked about Mr. Dubcek. There is no authoritative news. Even the Czech *Charge d'affaires* who has been in contact with his country at least till this morning–after that I have not been in touch and have no fresh news. But we have been very closely in touch with our embassies abroad and ambassadors of other countries in Delhi and, in particular, we have tried to establish contact with our ambassador in Czechoslovakia as well as with the *Charged' d'affaires* of Czechosloakia in Delhi. There is not much in the messages which we have received and which the hon. Members have not already heard about through radio or the press.

There was some misunderstanding about the rules which govern the conduct of business in the Security Council. May I ask your leave to explain the position briefly, and quote the relevant rules. In this case, as I have explained, we have supported practically the entire resolution, all but one sub-part of one single paragraph; part of one single paragraph out of nine paragraphs in all. We wanted to record our vote on the resolution accordingly.

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* Replying to Shri Hem Barua's question, "What was the resolution?"

** Replying to the debate on a Motion regarding the U.N. Security Council Resolution relating to Czechoslovakia, *L.S. Deb.*, 23 August, 1968. cc. 988-95.

The rules of the Security Council, however, lay down–may I quote from the relevant rules–it is rule 32:

> Part of a motion or of a draft resolution shall be voted on separately at the request of any representative, unless the original mover objects.

Our representative, therefore, approached the movers of the resolution and tried to persuade him to agree to voting by parts. Unfortunately, they did not agree.

It was is these circumstances that our representative had no alternative but to clarify our support to all parts of the Resolution with the exception of that one single word and thereafter he abstained on the Resolution taking it as a whole. An extract from the PTI despatch says:—

> In a speech early this morning Mr. Parthasarathy quoted that in the light of the statements of the Prime Minister of India it will be clear to the Security Council that India firmly supports respect for sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Czechoslovakia. It would be equally clear that we are against any interference in the internal affairs of Czechoslovakia. The immediate need is for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Czechoslovakia. I should like–this is what Parthasarathy said–to place on record our deep sympathy with the heroic people of Czechoslovakia in their present ordeal.

The word which has been coming up for much comment and the word to which we also took exception was the word 'condemn'. Now, Sir, to condemn or not to condemn is not the question (*Interruption*). What is more important and indeed vital, for Czechoslovakia is the withdrawal of all forces forthwith, the restoration of the legitimate Government to power and the restoration of sovereignty to the people of Czechoslovakia. We are in favour of all these objectives and we do not think that these objectives can be furthered by beginning with condemnation.

*** *** ***

I submit, Sir, that the main objective which we have to pursue as a mature and responsible people and as a member of the Security Council is to do everything possible to stop the process of serious setback to the forces of peace in Europe and generally in the world, to try and reverse the trends which have struck such a sharp blow to the earlier welcome process of peaceful co-existence and detente between the power blocs. This is what can serve the long-term and lasting interests of Europe and the world. That will also ensure the sovereignty and independence of Czechoslovakia. This is the only way in which an atmosphere can be created which is necessary for the full observance of the U.N. Charter (*Interruptions*).

*** *** ***

As I was saying, this is the only way in which an atmosphere can be created which is so necessary to ensure the full observance of the United Nations Charter and the observance of the charter rights of all free nations.

We have to face clearly what the reality is and what are the objectives. The reality is that even those countries which voted for that one part of the resolution in respect of which

we suggested a minor modification, even those countries are not, as far as we can see, prepared to take any concrete step to help the Czechoslovak people, beyond what we are doing, namely, calling for the withdrawal of troops, for safeguarding the charter rights of the Czechoslovaks and so on.

I have already outlined the points this morning and also in my statement yesterday. Whatever their reasons or motives may be, we do not wish to question them. But we are averse, on our part, to do anything which might look like an empty gesture and which might invite comment that it is an exercise in propaganda and, above all, which might add to the tension which has arisen and also might possibly add to the difficulties of the Czech. people.

Sir, much has been said here about the Government not daring to say something or to use a word; not daring to use a word which is strong enough. Some Members even called us stooges of one side or another. These are not new words. We have heard such remarks on occasion from one side of the House saying that we are the stooges of American imperialism; then we hear them from another side and we learn that we are, on the contrary, stooges of the Communists of one kind or another. This is, perhaps, the fate of all those who try to plod a middle path.

From the beginning, our policy has been to try to lessen tension, not merely as a good ideal–we do believe it is an ideal–but from the point of view of national interest. It is not in our interest that tension should develop and increase; it is not in our interest that violence should break; it is not in our interest that there should be war. As many leaders have said, as Acharyaji has pointed out, the high ideals that Mahatmaji has put before us, the ideal that freedom was indivisible, that we should fight for freedom, for justice, not only for ourselves but for all oppressed and threatened people, this we have been trying to do.

We talk of courage. Now, when the whole House is shouting, perhaps the easier path would have been for me to say that I accept this word. It is not easier to say, in the face of large numbers of people shouting, that I shall stand by a particular statement. But why do we stand by that particular statement? Why, in the face of similar excitement have we maintained our stand?

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Our stand has been made so clear, Shri Ranga.* It has been made very clear also, at the present moment, in the United Nations. It has been made clear to the representative of Czechoslovakia in New Delhi. It has been made clear through our Ambassador in Czechoslovakia to the people there. There is no doubt about our stand amongst all those people who are vitally concerned. I am sorry that in this House people should try to create confusion about it. What is our objective? Are we out to use this for propaganda purposes, saying this is wrong?

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Well, I am glad it is a matter of conscience.** When this matter first came up, I said and I repeat that it is this Government and this side which has been friendly with the

* Replying to Shri Ranga's question, "What is your stand?"

** Responding to Shri Ranga's observation: "No question of propaganda; it is a matter of conscience."

Government and the people of Czechoslovakia. It was not the parties who were now raising their voice, who had contacts with these parties....(*Interruptions*). I am not saying that they should not now express their sympathy. I welcome it; I think, it is a good thing that they are doing it now. But it is well to remember that they had taken a particular attitude about these countries; they had at some time resented our contacts with them, our economic contacts and so on, and not so very long ago.

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It is well to remember that in a previous debate in this House these countries were criticized; it was said that they are not our friends, that we should not have such close contacts with them. I do not want to say anything except that it is well to remember what was said in recent debates at this moment when we seem to be measuring friendship.

So I would like to submit to this House that we have very strongly and firmly put what is the real crux of the matter. From the beginning we have supported Czechoslovakia. We did not wait for anybody else to pin point the issues. We were the first and we stick by those principles with regard to Czechoslovakia, with regard to any other nation where they may be threatened. I think that there should be no doubt about that at all.

It would perhaps be presumptuous on my part to say that India has been able to change world trends or lessen tension all over the world. But I think it would also be unfair if we were to disregard totally the role which India has played in the lessening of tensions between the two power blocs and in creating a better atmosphere. This is something in which we are vitally interested and which we must continue to pursue. If I said that we must tread carefully or must choose our words carefully, it is not because we are afraid of anybody, it is not because we do not want to offend anybody or want to please somebody but it is because we feel this is a moment when we should not look only to the present. Of course, if in so doing we had not stressed the positive aspects, hon. Members would have been justified in saying that we were hesitating, but we have not hesitated in emphasizing and reiterating again and again the positive aspects of the matter. But we do feel that conditions should be created–I do not know if it is possible; it may not help at all but at least in our judgement it was felt that we should take a part which would help to lessen tension in this unhappy part of the world.

I spoke earlier about the safety of Mr. Dubcek and his colleagues and, I am sure, the House will join me in expressing our great concern. We learn from the latest news that the President has already gone to Moscow. It seems from his statement that he has gone of his own will and he has stated....(*Interruption*).

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Mr. Svoboda has asked his people to have faith in him and has told them that he will return tonight to report to them. He has also assured them that they will accept no Prime Minister except Prime Minister Cernik.

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I should also like to express my deep admiration and full sympathy for the Czechoslovak people in their time of trouble, and admiration for the peaceful and passive character of their demonstrations and the calm and dignity which they are displaying.

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May I add a word? Let us not use this opportunity for condemnation amongst ourselves but use it for expressing Czechoslovakia's point of view and for the principles which I have enunciated earlier. Let us create an atmosphere and let us work towards a world in which violence and force cannot triumph.

India and Latin America*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the House is aware of the bonds of friendship between the peoples of Latin America and India. Soon after our independence we established diplomatic relations with some countries of this region to further strengthen our relations. The political and economic realities of the contemporary world make it essential for us to constantly renew and establish our international links. During these years, leaders and some Heads of Government from that continent have visited us in India. Many Governments had extended invitations to us but, so far, it had not been possible for any Head of the Government of India to visit South America.... (*Interruption*).

I had received several invitations myself and in response to them visited Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Venezuela, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.... (*Interruption*). I was accorded the privilege of addressing the General Assembly of the United Nations during my brief stop-over in New York....(*Interruption*).

It was heartening to see what enormous goodwill and friendship there is for India in these countries. I found that we knew less about South America than the people of South America know of us... (*Interruption*). The names of Gandhiji, Tagore and Nehru are widely known and quoted. In every country the reception which was accorded to me, as the representative of India, by the Governments and the people, provided unmistakable proof that these distant lands entertain sincere feelings of warmth and friendship for us. It was a moving experience to discover that India is held in such high esteem, and indeed, affection. Everywhere there is deep interest in our present endeavours and understanding of our efforts to promote international peace and co-operation....(*Interruption*).

During the visit, I took the opportunity to have an exchange of views on a broad range of national and international political and economic problems. These countries belong to a single continent but each has a distinctive personality of its own. All of them face problems which in some ways are similar to our own . They are determined to preserve their national identities and to overcome the challenge of social change and economic development in a rapidly changing world. Confronted as they are with that problems of growth and the need to increase trade as a step towards development and self-reliance.....(*Interruption*), they also attach great importance to the implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

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* Statement on her visit to South America, *L.S. Deb.*, 12 November, 1968, cc. 184-88.

In my conversations with the leaders in these countries, it was agreed that we could help each other by increasing our contacts in different fields and at various levels and by sharing our experiences. Every effort will be made to facilitate the exchange of scientific and technological information between our countries.

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As hon. Members are aware India and Brazil are to cooperate in the field of utilisation of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The officials who accompanied me had useful discussions with their counterparts in these countries in regard to trade and other forms of mutually beneficial economic cooperation, among other matters... (*Interruption*) a Trade Delegation will proceed to South America in the near future to follow-up on the visit...(*Interruption*). The House is aware of the steps which have been initiated to further promote and strengthen cultural exchange in various fields, through visits of scholars, writers and other creative artists and their works....(*Interruption*).

During my visit, I announced the opening of a Resident Mission in Venezuela. We hope that similar widening of our representations in the continent will be possible in future.

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The representatives of India and the Latin American countries at the United Nations have worked together closely on a large number of issues which have come up before the world body or its agencies. We intend to enlarge and deepen these contacts in the spirit of the United Nations Charter and of international cooperation.

The visit to Trinidad & Tobago and to Guyana had particular interest, more so because a large segment of the population of these countries is of Indian origin. It was gratifying to find that they have identified themselves with their new homelands and are contributing to the progress and development of the countries of their domicile. In these countries, as indeed in the countries of Latin America, we were happy to find harmony between the people of different racial and cultural origins. In response to requests from these Governments, we have offered to provide technical knowhow and other kinds of economic cooperation to help them in their development plans.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is to our advantage and in our national interest to forge the closest relations with the large number of proud and resurgent nations of South America and the Carribean. We hope that with the follow-up action which we have in mind, our objective of developing close and fruitful relationship with them will be realised.

I should like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the welcome and hospitality which was accorded to me and the Members of my party.

India-Burma Relations*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the House is aware that at the invitation of His Excellency General Ne Win, Chairman of the Revolutionary Council and the Government of Burma, I paid an official visit to Burma from March 27 to March 30, 1969.

The relationship between India and Burma is closer than merely that of neighbours. Through the ages it has been sustained by the abiding values which have been cherished and shared by our two peoples. This long tradition of friendship was reinforced during our common struggle for freedom.

My visit was brief but I was glad to have the opportunity of exchanging views with the Chairman and his colleagues on a wide range of subjects of mutual interest to our countries. I venture to think that these exchanges and the visit strengthened the relations between our two countries and helped in promoting understanding and cooperation between our two Governments and peoples.

Chairman Ne Win and I had occasion to review the world scene in the light of political and economic issues of importance to the world today and more especially to us in the developing countries. As the House is aware, Burma and India stand for the promotion of international peace and understanding, based on respect for the sovereignty and independence of all countries. Our two countries attach the highest importance to the principle of non-interference in one another's internal affairs. In our discussions we agreed that the principal task of economic reconstruction which confronts our respective countries could be expedited by economic cooperation among the developing countries and more specially between neighbouring countries.

During my talks with Chairman Ne Win as also in the discussions which our officials had with Burmese officials, we naturally discussed matters of bilateral interest. These included problems concerning Indian citizens in Burma and those of Indian origin awaiting registration as Burmese citizens. Chairman Ne Win and his Government have agreed to look into their problems sympathetically and expeditiously. We also discussed measures to promote greater economic cooperation between our two countries. I hope that in the light of these discussions, closer bonds of economic cooperation will be established between Burma and India.

I took the opportunity to thank Chairman Ne Win and his Government for their vigilance along the Indo-Burmese border which, as the House is aware, has helped us to take more

* Making a Statement regarding her visit to Burma. *L.S. Deb.*, 3 April, 1969, cc. 233-34.

effective measures against some of the misguided elements on our eastern border. I hope that the House has noted the observations made by Chairman Ne Win at the banquet he was good enough to hold in my honour, that the Government would not countenance the use of Burmese territory by nationals or organisations of another State as a base for hostile activity against their home State or against a third State. Chairman Ne Win went on to say that it was in conformity with this basic stand that Burma had taken necessary measures against those nationals of India who sought to use Burmese territory for hostile activities against India.

I also thanked the Chairman for the cooperation and understanding which has been shown by Burma in the demarcation of our border, the first phase of which has been completed ahead of schedule.

Chairman and Madame Ne Win are always welcome in our country. I extended an invitation to them to visit India any time at their convenience, which they have accepted.

As is customary, a joint communique was issued by the two Governments at the end of my visit.

India and the Cambodian Crisis*

...We have made our views clear to the Americans, not today, but from the very beginning even when I visited the United States before I was a member of the Government; even then I expressed my understanding of the Government's point of view. We have not hesitated to make our views very clear to the U.S. Government, or anybody else who has asked our views on this matter, or sometimes even if they have not asked. There is no doubt that the present intervention,** as I stated in another forum, has aggravated the situation. We must not view the problem of Cambodia as related only to Cambodia. It is a part of the struggle in Vietnam and by this intervention....

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..The war has extended in area and in depth and this holds dangers to the whole of Asia. There is no doubt about it. The question is whether we should use very strong words in expressing our point of view. We have so far not expressed such words and as I have said earlier, if we do not use strong words, this does not mean that we do not feel strongly. On all former occasions also we have tried not to use very strong words.

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We have given our views. Our views are clear to the whole world. The house is excited about something which someone in America has said. I do not know why we should get excited about what somebody has said. What does it matter what they say about us? Does it change our policy.

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If the hon. Members will try to listen, they will know what I am talking about. They are getting mixed up. I have not said that the Americans should bomb. On the contrary, I have expressed myself fairly strongly on the matter of bombing of North Vietnam and so on. I am now not talking about bombing or even fighting. I am talking about somebody saying something about India. As far as I am concerned, it does not matter to me at all what anybody says about India. We stick to our policy.

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* Replying to a Calling Attention regarding the reported remarks by the American Vice-President, Mr. Spiro Agnew, that India as the Chairman of the International Control Commission in Cambodia was not taking any steps because of Soviet Opposition, *R.S. Deb.*, 11 May, 1970, cc. 113–36.

** U.S. armed intervention in Cambodia.

Words have come. *We have used words about the danger of the extending conflict. We have used words about the suffering of the people, about the courageous manner in which they have faced it. (*Interruption*). What is concrete? Only action can be concrete. Words cannot be concrete.

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The situation is an extremely delicate one. There are no Chinese there**, and on a previous occasion I have stated in this House that all this talk of containing China and so on is meaningless, because apart from the fact that the Chinese are not there, none of this action has in any way affected China, weakened it, contained it, or achieved any of the other things which were at first given out as the reasons for this war. What it has done is to put a tremendous burden on the people of Indo–China, specially on the people of North Vietnam. And it has caused tremendous suffering to the people. As we had prophesied earlier, the war is now gradually spreading to other nations. This is a great danger to all of South East Asia and to all of Asia, and there is no doubt that the Americans do share the responsibility very heavily....

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Whatever the intervention of the Americans, it is there. But there is also a local group or party, whatever you may like to call it and, whatever its weakness, it is there and we cannot ignore them.

This war has been tragic from the beginning and it is because of the hesitation of the Americans in removing their troops for reasons which I do not know–perhaps prestige or perhaps the thought that a solution could be found on the battlefield, that the war has continued and expanded, and has become so serious. We have spoken up against it all the time. We have said that it if continues in this manner, then it will extend to other countries. This is what has come to pass.

A question was asked about the International Control Commission. In this particular situation, it is indeed difficult for the Commission to function. As the hon. Members know, the I.C.C. consists, apart from India, of two countries who have generally stood on opposite sides. Therefore, the Commission has been rendered largely ineffective. We all know that. We can try to find some way out to see whether it can function. I doubt if it can, in this particular situation. As the hon. Members know, we have always believed that if there was the will to keep this matter on the negotiating table–and this would necessarily mean stopping the war, stopping the bombing, withdrawal of forces, and so on-then there would be some chance of negotiations leading to peace. But unfortunately that did not happen. We are in a situation which is delicate and also dangerous.

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Well, we have said that we would favour a Geneva-type Conference, because it would bring together all the people who are involved.*** The other Conference tends to be rasher

* Responding to Dr. K. Mathew Kurian's observation that strong feelings should be expressed in strong words.

** Responding to Shri Awadshwar Prasad Sinha's remark, "Chinese are doing it in Cambodia, not only Americans".

*** Replying to Shri Akbar Ali Khan who asked, "What about a Geneva Conference?"

one-sided Conference and instead of finding a solution, it may well aggravate the situation. That is why, much as we respect the Foreign Minister of Indonesia, we felt that it would not be possible for us to associate ourselves with the Indonesian Conference.

One hon. Member has asked: Why don't you call all these people? It is not enough to call all these people. There must be willingness in them, a wish, to sit together on this issue.

It is asked: Why are we not emotional? It is all right for Members of all sides of the House to express emotion and anger. But when a Government is trying to see whether something can be done, whether we can possibly lessen the tension, then it is better to try to keep this emotion at a low level. This does not mean that we are giving in to any lobby. We have not done so. We naturally want people to understand our point of view and appreciate it. But basically we have to come to our own conclusions after studying any given situation, wherever it is in the world. Our decisions is not dependent on others. Whether it is the United States or it is the USSR, we have to judge what we think is the right thing to do or to say, and we have to stick to it.

Much as we respect the statesmen of other countries, what they say about us is not really important; we should certainly protest; we should certainly take all diplomatic steps which such a situation demands. It does not matter to me what they say; I do not think it is any insult. They have got their stand and they see things from their one-sided point of view. And therefore, I certainly do not feel insulted. I can only say that the people who have made such remarks are entirely misinformed and they do not themselves realise the gravity or reality of the situation they have entered into, or how or in what way they are aggravating that situation.

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It is true that large sections of the American people, especially students and members of the faculties and the intelligentsia, are demonstrating and protesting vehemently against the actions of their Government and of their army. We have full sympathy with the students who have suffered and with the families of those who have lost their lives. The hon. Member* wanted me to call the Americans "hangmen". That word could only be used if they succeed in their attempt. I do not think they are going to succeed. Therefore, that word has no meaning.

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May I answer both hon. Members** simultaneously? Firstly, I should like to emphasise that we are not at all trying to cover up anything. We have always stood for a meeting. I realise that at this point the situation is complicated and delicate and that it may not be possible to have a meeting. But there is no reason why we should not try for a meeting. We say there should be a meeting. But we do not know if it can be held. I think the hon.

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* Shri K.P. Subramania Menon.

** S/Shri Mahavir Tyagi and K.P. Subramania Menon.

Member has demanded that we should call for the withdrawal of forces. We have been saying just this all along. We are not now saying that forces should remain there. We do think that they should be withdrawn. We have said this all along, ever since the American forces went to Vietnam. We regard the Cambodian question as an extension of the Vietnam war. It is not a separate, or new question. Therefore, our position on this has been clear. I am willing to repeat it if necessary. We have reiterated our view.

The hon. Member opposite has spoken on not taking a partisan view. It is true that being the Chairman of the International Control Commission, it places us in a delicate situation. But because of that, we cannot be prevented from expressing our view on what we consider the justice of the case. Therefore, we have taken a broad view on the struggle in Vietnam. We have not been sitting on the fence as some Members here have been trying to imply. I should like to assure the hon. Member, Shri Tyagi, that no amount of shooting has ever moved me form my stand. While I sympathise fully with the excitement of hon. Members, because the sufferings and the difficulties of the people of Vietnam and Cambodia are great and real, shouting is not going to move me from my stand, and my stand is the stand which the Government of India has been taking consistently, firmly, ever since the conflict in South-East Asia began. We have always stood for the withdrawal of outside forces.

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I do not know what the Member means because unfortunately, most of the world is in the position of a spectator.* Either you join the conflict, or even if you have a conference, you are still a spectator; you are not dealing with the conflict as such; you are just discussing it. We thought that perhaps if the issue could be discussed in a wider forum, there was some likelihood not very great, I admit, but some likelihood–of lessening tension. But at this moment, when the conflict has been escalated in this manner, I admit that it is difficult to see any way out immediately.

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I have said earlier that there is no question of hesitating on any question. The hon. Member** knows that there is another member of the Commission besides Poland. Now when a particular situation arises, one member may not want to do something but when another situation arises the other Member may not want to do something. It is not a question of any member pressurising, but unless you get both members to agree...

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The question is to get them to agree to some action, and this has been the difficulty–in getting them to agree.

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* Replying to Shri N.G. Goray's observations, "In spite of the fact that we are the Chairman of the International Control Commission, we are not in a position to call the Commission into activity... Does it mean that so long as this conflict continues, India will be reduced to the position of a spectator?"

** Shri Shyamnandan Mishra.

It would be very wrong to say that any act of ours was forced by anybody or that it was the cause of a large-scale intervention by the US. The other question the Member asked was about our trading with North Vietnam. I myself have answered this question on the floor of this House. The answer was that the Government of India took that decision at the time of the Chinese invasion. It had nothing to do with other countries. We have further said that if the necessity arose, we would be willing to reconsider the question but it has nothing to do with other countries.

Developments in East Bengal

Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all if, I may say so, you have the House, some news we have received...**

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The point is that this news has come through Radio Pakistan and, therefore, I cannot say whether it is true or not. We should not automatically take it as true because it could be just propaganda.

Sir, strength does not lie in words. If my colleague Sardar Sahib has not spoken with passion, it is not due to lack of feeling either on his part or on the part of the Government but because of the fact that we are deeply conscious of the historic importance of this movement and the seriousness of the situation.

Something new had happened in East Bengal–a democratic election where an entire people had spoken with almost one voice. We had welcomed this, not because we wanted to interfere in another country's affairs, but because those were the values as one of my hon. friends*** pointed out, for which we have always stood and for which we have always spoken out. And we had hoped that this action would lead to a new situation in our neighbouring country which would help us to get closer, which would help us to serve our own people better and create an entirely new situation in this sub-continent. As our statement has said, this did not happen and a wonderful opportunity for even strengthening of Pakistan has been lost and has been lost in a manner which is tragic, which is agonising and about which we cannot find strong enough words to speak. This again is a new situation but in a different way. It is not merely the suppression of a movement, but it is meeting an unarmed people with tanks. We are in close touch as close touch, with the events as is possible in such a situation.

I am sure hon. Members will understand that it is not possible for the Government to say very much more on this occasion. I would like to assure the hon. Members who asked whether decisions would be taken on time, that obviously is the most important thing to do. There is no point in taking a decision when the time for it is over. We are fully alive to

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* Participating in the general discussion after a Statement made by the Minister of External Affairs on 'recent developments in East Bengal', *L.S. Deb.*, 27 March, 1971, cc. 42-43.

** Before this, the Speaker mentioned in the House that the PTI news quoting Radio Pakistan said that the East Bengal Leader Mujibur Rahman had been arrested.

*** Dr. Hari Prasad Sharma.

the situation and we shall keep constantly in touch with what is happening and what we need to do. I agree with him also that we must not take merely a theoretical view. At the same time we have to follow proper international norms. Various other suggestions have been made about genocide and so on about which we are fully conscious and which we have also discussed with the leaders of the Opposition. At this moment I can only say that we do fully share the agony, the emotions of the House and their deep concern over these developments. We have always believed that freedom is indivisible. We have always raised our voice for those who have suffered, but in a serious situation like this the less we as a Government say I think the better it is at this moment. I can assure the House that we shall keep in close touch with the situation and also we shall keep in close touch with the leaders of the Opposition so that they can continue to give us their suggestions and we can also give them whatever knowledge we are able to.

Solidarity with the People of East Bengal*

Sir, the tragedy which has overtaken our valiant neighbours in East Bengal so soon after their rejoicing over their electoral victory has united us all in grief for their destruction of their beautiful land and anxiety for their future. I wish to move a Resolution which has been discussed with the Leaders of the Opposition and, I am glad to say, approved unanimously.

I beg to move the following Resolution :

"This House expresses its deep anguish and grave concern at the recent developments in East Bengal. A massive attack by armed forces, despatched from West Pakistan has been unleashed against the entire people of East Bengal with a view to suppressing their urges and aspirations.

Instead of respecting the will of the people so unmistakably expressed through the election in Pakistan in December 1970, the Government of Pakistan has chosen to flout the mandate of the people.

The Government of Pakistan has not only refused to transfer power to legally elected representatives but has arbitrarily prevented the National Assembly from assuming its rightfull and sovereign role. The people of East Bengal are being sought to suppress by the naked use of force, by bayonets, machine guns, tanks, artillery and aircraft.

The Government and people of India have always desired and worked for peaceful, normal and fraternal relations with Pakistan. However, situated as India is and bound as the peoples of the subcontinent are by centuries old ties of history, culture and tradition, this House cannot remain indifferent to the macabre tragedy being enacted so close to our border. Throughout the length and breadth of our land, our people have condemned, in unmistakable terms, the atrocities now being perpetrated on an unprecedented scale upon an unarmed and innocent people.

This House express its profound sympathy for and solidarity with the people of East Bengal in their struggle for a democratic way of life.

Bearing in mind the permanent interest which India has in peace, and committed as we are to uphold and defend human rights, this House demands immediate cessation of the use of force and of the massacre of defenceless people.

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* While moving a Resolution on the developments in Bangladesh, *L.S. Deb.*, 31 March, 1971, cc. 114–16.

This House calls upon all peoples and Governments of the world to take urgent and constructive steps to prevail upon the Government of Pakistan to put an end immediately to the systematic decimation of people which amounts to genocide.

This House records its profound conviction that the historic upsurge of the 75 million people of East Bengal will triumph. The House wishes to assure them that their struggle and sacrifices will receive the whole-hearted sympathy and support of the people of India".*

* (i) The Resolution was adopted unanimously without any discussion.

(ii) An identical Resolution was moved by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi, in Rajya Sabha also. (*R.S. Deb.*, 31 March, 1971, cc. 123-24.)

Situation in Bangladesh*

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in the seven weeks since Parliament recessed, the attention of the entire country has been focussed on the continuing tragedy in Bangladesh. Hon. Members will recall the atmosphere of hope in which we met in March. We all felt that our country was poised for rapid economic advance and a more determined attack on the age-old poverty of our people. Even as we were settling down to these new tasks, we have been engulfed by a new and gigantic problem, not of our making.

On the 15th and 16th May, I visited Assam, Tripura and West Bengal, to share the suffering of the refugees from Bangladesh, to convey to them the sympathy and support of this House and the people of India and to see for myself the arrangements which are being made for their care. I am sorry it was not possible to visit other camps this time. Every available building, including schools and training institutions, has been requisitioned. Thousands of tents have been pitched and temporary shelters are being constructed as quickly as possible in the 335 camps which have been established so far. In spite of our best efforts, we have not been able to provide shelter to all those who have come across, and many are still in the open. The district authorities are under severe strain. Before they can cope with those who are already here, 60,000 more are coming across every day.

So massive a migration, in so short a time, is unprecedented in recorded history. About three and a half million people have come into India from Bangladesh during the last eight weeks. They belong to every religious persuasion–Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist and Christian. They come from every social class and age group. They are not refugees in the sense we have understood this word since Partition. They are victims of war who have sought refuge from the military terror across our frontier.

Many refugees are wounded and need urgent medical attention. I saw some of them in the hospitals I visited in Tripura and West Bengal. Medical facilities in all our border States have been stretched to breaking point. Equipment for 1,100 new hospital beds has been rushed to these States, including a 400 bed mobile hospital generously donated by the Government of Rajasthan. Special teams of surgeons, physicians, nurses and public health experts have been deputed to the major camps. Special water supply schemes are being executed on the highest priority, and preventive health measures are being undertaken on a large scale.

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* Statement regarding the situation in Bangladesh, *L.S. Deb.*, 24 May, 1971, cc. 184-89.

In our sensitive border States, which are facing the brunt, the attention of the local administration has been diverted from normal and development work to problems of camp administration, civil supplies and security. But our people have put the hardships of the refugees above their own, and have stood firm against the attempts of Pakistani agent-provocateurs to cause communal strife. I am sure this fine spirit will be maintained.

On present estimates, the cost to the Central Exchequer on relief alone may exceed Rs. 180 crores for a period of six months. All this, as hon. Members will appreciate, has imposed an unexpected burden on us.

I was heartened by the fortitude with which these people of Bangladesh have borne tribulation, and by the hope which they have for their future. It is mischieveous to suggest that India has had anything to do with what happened in Bangladesh. This is an insult to the aspirations and spontaneous sacrifices of the people of Bangladesh, and a calculated attempt by the rulers of Pakistan to make India a scapegoat for their own misdeeds. It is also a crude attempt to deceive the world community. The world press has seen through Pakistan's deception. The majority of these so-called Indian infiltrators are women, children and the aged.

This House has considered many national and international issues of vital importance to our country. But none of them has touched us so deeply as the events in Bangladesh. When faced with a situation of such gravity, it is specially important to weigh every word in acquainting this House, and our entire people with the issues involved and the responsibilities which now devolve on us all.

These twenty-three years and more, we have never tried to interfere with the internal affairs of Pakistan, even though they have not exercised similar restraint. And even now we do not seek to interfere in any way. But what has actually happened? What was claimed to be an internal problem of Pakistan, has also become an internal problem for India. We are, therefore, entitled to ask Pakistan to desist immediately from all actions which it is taking in the name of domestic jurisdiction, and which vitally affect the peace and well-being of million of our own citizens. Pakistan cannot be allowed to seek a solution of its political or other problems at the expense of India and on Indian soil.

Has Pakistan the right to compel at bayonet-point, not hundreds of thousands, but millions of its citizens to flee their home? For us it is an intolerable situation. The fact that we are compelled to give refuge and succour to these unfortunate millions cannot be used as an excuse to push more and more people across our border.

We are proud of our tradition of tolerance. We have always felt contrite and ashamed of our moments of intolerance. Our nation, our people are dedicated to peace and are not given to talking in terms of war or threat of war. But I should like to caution our people that we may be called upon to bear still heavier burdens.

The problems which confront us are not confined to Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and West Bengal. They are national problems. Indeed, the basic problem is an international one.

We have sought to awaken the conscience of the world through our representatives abroad and the representatives of foreign Governments in India. We have appealed to the

United Nations, and, at long last, the true dimensions of the problem seem to be making themselves felt in some of the sensitive chanceries of the world. However, I must share with the House, our disappointment at the unconscionably long time which the world is taking to react to this stark tragedy....

Not only India, but every country has to consider its interests. I think I am expressing the sentiments of this august House and of our people when I raise my voice against the wanton destruction of peace, good neighbourliness and elementary principles of humanity by the insensate action of the military rulers of Pakistan. They are threatening the peace and stability of the vast segment of humanity represented by India.

We welcome Secretary General, U Thant's public appeal. We are glad that a number of States have either responded or are in the process of doing so. But time is the essence of the matter. Also the question of giving relief to these millions of people is only part of the problem. Relief cannot be perpetual or permanent. And we do not wish it to be so. Condition must be created to stop any further influx of refugees and to ensure their early return under credible guarantees for their future safety and well-being. I say with all sense of responsibility that unless this happens, there can be no lasting stability or peace on this sub-continent. We have pleaded with other Powers to recognise this. If the world does not take heed, we shall be constrained to take all measures as may be necessary to ensure our own security and the preservation and development of the structure of our social and economic life.

We are convinced that there can be no military solution to the problem of East Bengal. A political solution must be brought about by those who have the power to do so. World opinion is a great force. It can influence even the most powerful. The Great powers have a special responsibility. If they exercise their power rightly and expeditiously then only we can look forward to durable peace on our sub-continent. But if they fail–and I sincerely hope that they will not–then this suppression of human rights, the uprooting of people, and the continued homelessness of vast numbers of human beings will threaten peace.

This situation cannot be tackled in a partisan spirit or in terms of party politics. The issue involved concern every citizen. I hope that this Parliament, our country and our people will be ready to accept the necessary hardships so that we can discharge our responsibilities to our own people as well as to the millions, who have fled from a reign of terror to take temporary refuge here.

All this imposes on us heavy obligations and the need for stern national discipline.We shall have to make many sacrifices. Our factories and farms must produce more. Our railways and our entire transport and communication system must work uninterruptedly. This is no time for any interplay of regional or sectional interests. Everything must be subordinated to sustain our economic, social and political fabric and to reinforce national solidarity. I appeal to every citizen, every man, woman and child to be imbued with the spirit of service and sacrifice of which, I know, this nation is capable.*

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* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi in Rajya Sabha also. (*R.S. Deb.*, 24 May, 1971, cc. 220-23.)

Independence Movement in Bangladesh*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I express my deep appreciation of the sentiments voiced on all sides of the House in regard to the struggle of Bangladesh? I fully realise that even though some hon. Members have used harsh words, they have done so out of deep emotion and feelings of concern. They have reflected the anguish which we and the entire country feels at the tragic and heart rending happenings in Bangladesh. My Government and I share that anguish with deep concern.

It is only natural that with our own tradition of love of freedom, our involvement with the values of democracy and human rights, we should feel deeply concerned when these values are crushed.

We have heard much talk of democracy. The Allies claimed that the Second World War was fought to save democracy. But when democracy is so flagrantly and so brutally being destroyed, we do not hear much comment, nor do we see the sort of spontaneous strong responses which the situation warrants. Could there be a greater or a clearer expression of democracy than the one we witnessed in the elections in Pakistan? Let me remind the House that although the elections were held under the rules formulated by the military regime, immediately afterwards military repression was used mercilessly to halt the process leading to the formation of a democratically elected Government in Pakistan.

We are told by some countries that while they may disapprove of what is being done by the military rulers, they cannot be a party to the disintegration of Pakistan. Is it suggested that we wish the disintegration of Pakistan ? Have we not, as many Members have pointed out, at every step tried not only for propriety in our relationship but also for friendship ?

If there is a struggle between the two parts of Pakistan, it is certainly not of our making but of the rulers of Pakistan. Is it anybody's contention that the methods being used today can achieve any integration or stability, worth the name, now or in the future?

The question of secession is also raised, if I may say so. This is a distortion of facts. It is conveniently forgotten that the majority of Pakistan's people live in the eastern region. In a democratic system, the majority does have certain rights. They cannot be accused of secession if they assert those rights. However, if today there is such strong feeling amongst our people, it is not merely because the democratic rights and liberties of 75 million people

* Replying to the discussion on influx of refugees from East Bengal to India, *L.S. Deb.*, 26 May, 1971, cc. 219-26.

are being crushed but because of the damaging effect which this cruel tragedy is having on our entire country, economically, politically and socially.

This is the reality of the situation. It is not propaganda or the figment of anyone's imagination. Our experience of the influx of refugees and the preposterous propaganda by Pakistan has reinforced the fact that what is happening in Bangladesh does have many sided repercussions on our internal affairs. That is why I have said that this cannot be considered merely as an internal problem of Pakistan. It is an Indian problem. More, it is a world-wide problem. The international community must appreciate the very critical character of the situation that has now developed.

Any failure to do so may well lead to disastrous consequences. For what is happening in Bangladesh is not just a political or an economic problem. It is a problem of the very survival of the people of that whole area, the peoples of Bangladesh.

It is a problem created by calculated genocide that is resulting not only in the murder of tens of thousands of men, women and children but also forcing many more to seek refuge and shelter in India. It is a problem that threatens the peace and security of India and, indeed, of South-East Asia. The world must intervene to see that peace and security is re-established and maintained.

As hon. Members know, yesterday, there was a similar debate in the other House. I had to sit there also for a part of the time and, so, I could not listen to all the speeches which were made here. I was sorry, however, to hear some hon. Members take even this opportunity to cast aspersions on our Foreign Office. I must deplore this tendency to try and find an easy way out by blaming the services. I do not say that we have not made mistakes or that all our representatives are always upto the mark. When there is a mistake, we should certainly find fault. But constant criticism is disheartening and demoralising. We should not blunt the instruments with which we have to function. Our work here and abroad has to continue. We do realise that any help given to the rulers of Pakistan will be used against the innocent people of Bangladesh.

On this occasion, our representatives abroad have worked hard and have done excellent work. They have been as effective as they could possibly be in the prevailing circumstances. Some Governments have set views, and even if their sympathies are roused, they are not often willing to take a stand on a matter such as this. I would like to say that all our services engaged in dealing with the present situation have shown fortitude and a sense of dedication.

If it gives some solace to hon. Members to abuse the Government and blame them for lack of courage, for lack of direction and even of understanding, I certainly do not want to deprive them of this comfort. To some Members, guts are equated with voice-power and the use of passionate words. I wish life were so simple.

Now, this Government may have many faults; but it does not lack courage nor is it afraid of taking a risk if it is a necessary risk. As I have said many times over, we are not merely concerned with the legal aspect of this situation or, indeed of any situation. We are concerned with one thing and one thing and only–our own national interest and security,

and naturally that of the heroic people of Bangladesh, that is why it is important to act calmly. The situation is far too grave for anything else.

The word 'recognition' has echoed from every side as if recognition by itself could solve the many difficulties which confront the people of Bangladesh or the many difficulties which our country faces, especially our States on the border, that is, West Bengal, Assam, Tripura and Meghalaya. We have given deep and anxious thought to all aspects of this question. It is, as my colleague has said, constantly under view. We are not writing to see that what other countries will do in the matter. Whatever decision we take in this, or other issues is guided by our own independent assessment of the situation and how our interests in the broadest sense are served.

Yesterday I spoke deliberately in very measured words of our present difficulties and of the likely dangers and burdens, not because I am or ever have been afraid of burdens or of danger but because I want hon. Members to think deeply about all these matters.

Danger can be faced only when one is prepared for it. This, –as I said previously and I should like to repeat,–is no time for party rivalry. We must stand together; we must help one another in the economic and other tasks which confront us. Communal tendencies must be curbed. All parties, I think, must help to ensure that the question of Bangladesh and of the refugees is not reduced to a communal level but is kept on its true level, which is a national and an interntional one.

I shall continue to keep in touch with the Leaders of the Opposition and with other Members of this hon. House on these questions and developments. I hope that Members will feel free to come to see me to express their view or whatever knowledge they have on the subject. In the meantime–there is not much else that I can say.

I would only say, let us not lose heart. Let us have faith in ourselves and in our people. Let us have faith in the courageous people of Bangladesh and in their determination to fight for their rights. No great task is achieved without sacrifice. There is an old saying

"Is experience gained with a song?

No, it takes all that a man has."

Sacrifice and hardship there must be, for all who fight for freedom or for justice or for a great cause. But I have no doubt that the spirit of man and the spirit of freedom cannot be vanquished. We must face this entire problem with confidence, and as I said, do what we have to do with calm and deep thought and with unity amongst ourselves.

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*It is true that there was an intrusion in part of Assam, and the Chief Minister has phoned to me. But we sent immediate help, and the intruders were driven out. The situation is under control. They were driven out by five o'clock the day before yesterday.

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* Responding to the clarification sought by Shri Indrajit Gupta about the Pakistani intrusion into Assamese and Meghalyan territory.

Any case of spying* is always treated with the utmost seriousness, whether in Assam or anywhere else in the country.

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So far as I know, always all such entrants are being registered except some who manage to avoid registration.** Although my colleague, the Minister for Rehabilitation, is doing all he can to provide tents, tarpaulins etc., there is no doubt that we are not fully equipped to deal with such a large influx. So, there is bound to be discomfort and hardship which we are trying to minimise to the extent possible.

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* Replying to the question of Shri Dinesh Chandra Goswami : "Is Government contemplating serious steps so that spying is not done in that most sensitive and strategic area of Assam?"

** Responding to the query of Smt. Bibha Ghosh about the registration of refugees from Bangladesh.

Relief to Refugees from Bangladesh*

I am glad that my colleague, Shri Khadilkar, has been able to satisfy the hon. Shri Arjun Arora.

Sir, I had not expected to intervene in this discussion because we have made our policy very clear. I was rather astonished to hear from one of the Members that our policy is not clear. I think our policy is quite clear. I am astonished at the lack of confidence in our people of our country, which our Members are constantly displaying. Are we citizens of a great country? Are we citizens who have confidence in ourselves or not? Listening to this debate, it seems to me that this is a far more important question than the question of what is happening to the refugees from Bangladesh. Because if we have no confidence in ourselves, it doesn't matter what we say, we will not be able to implement it.

I speak here with a tremendous confidence in my people and in my Government. I have no doubt at all that we can face the problem which has come upon us. What does this mean ? Does it mean that no refugee will suffer? It cannot possibly mean that. When any country has to face a large influx–not an influx over a long period, but a sudden influx within a few weeks, of nearly six million people–it is not a joke; it is not a small thing. I would like to know from hon. Members : do they know any country in the world which has faced even one–tenth of this situation before ? It is very easy to sit in this House and just criticize and critisize instead of trying to assess the realities of the situation. If even ten thousand refugees arrive in any European country, the whole Continent of Europe will be afire, all the newspapers, the Governments and everybody will be aroused. We are trying to deal with nearly 6 million human beings who have fled from a region of terror, who have come wounded, with disease, with illness, hunger and exhaustion. And they have come to our country, which is one of the poorest in the world. We certainly have the fullest sympathy with these war evacuees or refugees, or whatever you would like to call them.

We are going to do our very best to look after them. Even if we have to sacrifice, even if we have to go hungry, I hope the hon. Members will be the first to initiate a movement of missing a meal. But at the same time we have to see that our own poor people do not suffer, do not die. We have a double responsibility: a responsibility to our people and a responsibility to our friends from across the border.

One hon. Member spoke of our taking a begging bowl to other countries. Sir, I am not in the habit of begging. I have never begged. I am not begging now. And I have no intention

* While replying to the Short Duration Discussion on the situation arising out of the influx of millions of refugees from Bangladesh into India, *R.S. Deb.*, 15 June, 1971, cc. 242-48.

of begging. If our emissaries go from this country to other countries, they are not speaking with a voice of weakness; they are not begging. We are sending them because this is an international responsibility. And we are not going to let the international community get away with it. They cannot avoid their responsibility. They may give help, or they may not give help. But they will certainly suffer from the consequences of whatever happens in this part of the world. We must put this problem to them in its proper perspective. We certainly want help, and the more help we get, the better we shall be able to look after the refugees. But so far this help has been pitiable in proportion to what is needed, it is about one-tenth of what is actually needed so far as we have been able to assess. I hope that this help will increase. This is very important from the point of view of saving lives, of giving better nourishment to children and of giving better treatment to those who are suffering from cholera and other diseases. But the point is not the quantity of help. Our appeal is even more important from the point of view of putting this problem in perspective. What are we concerned about ? We are concerned about the lives and the comforts of the refugees, but we are even more concerned about the problem of democracy, the problem of Human Rights, the problem of human dignity, which have now been brought into focus before us and the whole world in such a poignant and heartrending manner. And if our representatives have gone, whether they are members of the Council of Ministers, whether they are non-official people or other people, it is with this end in view, namely that all the countries should be told about the reality of the situation, I think that our efforts have succeeded in this in some measure. Today the world press is reacting more sharply and is devoting greater space to this question. I think that we have had some thing to do with this change of attitude. So, we should not sneeze at all the efforts that are being made. As I said on a previous occasion I can understand the emotionalism and the sense of sorrow and of helplessness which hon. Members and many people outside feel. It is understandable and I sympathise with it. But it should lead us to something more. It should not lead us to a dead end, to a feeling that nothing is being done, that nothing can be done and that we are going to be engulfed. We are bearing a tremendous burden and as I said–I do not know whether the word is parliamentary or not; if it is not please strike it out, Sir–as I said in my meetings with the people even in the camps where I had gone, we will have to go through hell to meet this situation. But I have no doubt that we can emerge, and we will. It will hurt us in many ways, economically and in other ways, but we will get through if we have the courage, the determination and the endurance. I personally believe that our people do have these qualities and therefore we will be able to handle this situation. But it cannot be done on cheaply either as regards the financial effort or the physical effort. The effect may hurt all sections of the people, all along the line. It may even effect some of our essential programmes. But this is something which we cannot avoid because, as I have said on an earlier occasion, what happens in Bangladesh will have an impact on India. We are concerned with the general principle of democracy but we are more concerned here because Bangladesh is so close to our border that its impact will be very much greater than if such a thing had happened in a distant place.

My colleague just now mentioned about the much publicised reception centres opened by the West Pakistan Government in Bandladesh. I do not know what these reception centres are going to do. So far nobody has returned from any of our refugee camps except

a small number–about two thousand–who are reported to have gone back from a part of northern India for various reasons which had nothing to do with the opening of the reception centres in East Bengal.

So far as I remember, it was Shri Goray, or may be one of the other hon. Members–who asked something about what we meant by political settlement. I think he will excuse me; he has put rather an extraordinary interpretation on that word. Does he for a moment believe that we would accept a political settlement which means the death of Bangladesh, which means the ending of democracy or of those who are fighting for their rights ? India could never accept such a state of affairs. When we talked of political settlement, we meant that a political settlement must be arrived at with those people who are today being suppressed. I am not expressing a view whether such a settlement is possible or not, but clarifying what we have said at an earlier stage. If international pressure through whatever means available to the big powers and to other countries were exerted, I think that a political settlement would have been possible at an earlier stage. Now, of course, with each passing day this possibility becomes more remote.

We are looking after the refugees on a temporary basis. We have no intention of allowing them to settle here nor can we allow them to go back merely to be butchered.

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One hon. Member* said something about China having become free after us. I have not quite understood what this means. So far as I know, China has not been under foreign rule in the way that we have been. It has always been a free country. It is true that earlier it did not have a communist government, and now it has one. But it was a free country all along.

There is some confusion in the minds of hon. Members whether refugees are being removed or whether they are to be kept where they are. It is not easy to be clear on this matter because of the magnitude of the problem. Even if we want to remove the refugees, it is physically not possible to do so. Each train carries about 1,200; or it may be a little more. But with the best will in the world we can only move a small portion of them. We are trying to move them specially to land which belongs to the Central Government in different States but it is not an easy matter to do and however we may try to move them there still will be a tremendous burden on the States where they are today. And specially as you must have heard from Shri Khadilkar....

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We have used trucks; we are using planes; we are using railway trains; we are using goods trains. But with all that–they are six million people–you cannot remove them easily or quickly.**

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* Shri B.N. Mandal.

** Responding to Shri Kalyan Roy's suggestion, "You are depending only on railways. Fleets of trucks may be used to shift them to other places."

In this country we have a shortage of practically everything which they need. We have a shortage of tarpaulins; we have a shortage of corrugated iron sheets; we have a shortage of every possible thing you can think of. We have tried to round up these items from every part of the country; we are rushing them to the camps. But no matter what we do–I am sorry to say–we cannot keep the refugees on anything remotely resembling comfort because of the nature of the problem. And I am glad to say that wherever I have been the spirit in these camps has really been magnificent. They are living under extremely difficult conditions but they understand and appreciate our difficulties. So, we should continue to try and do our best but we should always keep in view the long term aspect of the problem and specially the aspect that it will mean tremendous hardship for all of us and for our people. We must all, as leaders or members of political parties, as citizens of this country prepare our people for this period of hardship because without it we can neither help the refugees nor deal with the larger problem. This House has always shown a great deal of understanding. I know that it is necessary from time to time to have an opportunity to blow off steam and to work off emotions. This is natural and understandable but when all is said, I am grateful to the House for the understanding it has showed and for the co-operation which it gives. Thank you.

Trial of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I can fully appreciate the deep concern, anxiety and, indeed, agony of the mind of the hon. Members with regard to the news which has been coming across from West Pakistan.

I can only say that the Government shares this agony and anxiety. I do not agree with the last sentence of the hon. Member** that the freedom movement in Bangladesh will die. Because we all know that martyrdom gives immortality. We all know, that far from weakening a movement, it strengthens it. Everywhere in the world, freedom struggles have gone from strength to strength, the more the authority has tried to suppress them.

Sir, we have tried to get some news. This is from the United Press International–the hon. Members can take it or leave it.

"But the Pakistani officials to-day refused to say whether the trial of the Awami League leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman started on schedule yesterday."

There has been no other news. No mention on any of the Pakistan Radio broadcasts.

Just now we have been discussing the natural calamities of drought and floods which cause hardship and suffering to our people year after year. But, here there is a calamity of great magnitude, not caused by nature but by man and one which is quite unnecessary. As I have said on previous occasions, we are concerned not only because of the ideals of freedom and human dignity and human suffering but also because this tragedy has a direct effect and impact on our own country.

I can understand the desire of the Members for greater effort on our part. Many Members have sent telegrams to various organizations and Parliaments abroad. The Government of India also has approached the Secretary-General of the U.N., U Thant. I myself have written on more than one occasion to the Heads of States and Prime Ministers to try their best to save the life of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. I know that there is a feeling in Parliament that Parliament itself should move a resolution. I have no objection to such a resolution, but I feel that it would not serve much purpose except to reiterate our own strong feelings. We know that the sort of military regime which exists in Pakistan is not going to pay any heed to our resolution or even to the opinion of other peoples of the

* Statement regarding the reported trial of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by the Military Regime of Pakistan, *L.S. Deb.*, 12 August, 1971, cc. 368-72.

** Shri S.M. Banerjee.

world. Perhaps it could be pressurised by certain Governments and we are doing our best that such pressure should be exercised.

We have also to take into account the fact that anything we do could harm the cause. We know that there is an effort on the part of the military regime to propagate the view that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's actions are activated by India and that India is encouraging him. All kinds of other allegations which have no foundation whatsoever are being made...

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They are lies, but we should not do anything which could encourage this propaganda and might go against him.*

One more point I should like to make to the hon. Members. Sometimes in our speeches, we tend to talk about West Pakistan. At all times we should make a distinction between the people of West Pakistan with whom we have no quarrel whatsoever...(*Interruptions*) and the military regime which is responsible for the atrocities in Bangladesh and which is suppressing the legitimate political rights of the people even in the different provinces of West Pakistan. Now we come to the end of the session. As we do so, we reiterate our strong feelings about Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and all that is happening to the long-suffering people of the Bangladesh. They are a gifted people who have perhaps given more revolutionaries in this sub-continent than any other part of the region. To-day they are undergoing great hardship.

As I said earlier, Sheikh Mujib is not just an individual. We should be concerned about the liberty and the rights even of an individual and a revolutionary. But, to-day, he has become the embodiment... (*Interruptions*) of the aspirations and urges of the people of Bangladesh and of the suffering and spirit of sacrifice which they are enduring with such courage and fortitude.

This is a good note on which to end the session. It is very sad note but such are the circumstances of the situation....

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Several have written to us that they are taking up this matter or that they have taken up the matter.**

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The hon. Member must have seen the statement issued by U Thant.*** It appeared in the morning papers. I don't know whether it is the full statement or not. But, that it will give the hon. Member some idea of the difficulties of the situation. We are aware of the weaknesses of the U.N. which have been obvious in other situations also.

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* Responding to Shri S.M. Banerjee's Remark, "It is all lies."

** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's question, "What are the reactions of other countries to your approach to the trial of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman ?"

*** Replying to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra who asked, "U Thant has no initiative in this matter so far ?"

Another question is what will help Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at this particular moment. I am glad that the House has shown such unity and solidarity in this matter, because, this is a source of strength to us in this situation. We are interested not merely because of our opinion about Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, but, because we think that the action proposed by the military regime of West Pakistan will have an impact, not only on Bangladesh and on our country, but we feel, that will have a much wider impact all over the world. Nor will it help even those countries who think they are helping the military Government of West Pakistan. Even that end will not be served.

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*Sir, this is one of the occasions when the entire House has one feeling and one voice. I share the agony which hon. Members have expressed and I appreciate the attitude of solidarity which some hon. Members of the Opposition have expressed. We are in a very difficult situation. Several suggestions have been made all of which are suggestions to which we have no objection at all. If we have a Resolution or I ask U Thant to go to Islamabad, I see no objection in it but the only question that comes to my mind is will it be effective, what will be the result ? As some hon. Members have said here, with a military regime which has been acting in the way that we have all seen and heard about, it will only disregard our Resolution or any feelings we may express with impunity. Whether U Thant will be willing to go after the sort of statement which he had issued is another question which comes to mind.

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I have no objection to asking him** to go; the only question in my mind is whether it will have any effect, whether in fact he will go as a result of my letter. We have also to contend with the fact that whatever we do further irritates the military regime in West Pakistan so that whether we are the best people to be in the forefront of any of this movement is also a question to be considered. This is why, if sometimes we have not spoken as loudly or as strongly as hon. Members have wished, it is not because we do not feel about this matter acutely but because of the thought as to what would be the effect. Would it create the opposite effect–in the minds or increase certain–I do not want to use the word stubborn–that kind of thing; if these people are saying this that is all the more reason why we shall go ahead with that. It can create that kind of reaction. These are some of the questions which we must all consider before we decide what we do. We have not left a single stone unturned in trying to bring to the notice of the World Governments what is happening, the results it can have in this entire area, specially our assessment of the future of that region and that we do think that what has happened in Bangladesh cannot be reversed. Something is happening and we all know from history that the sort of action that the Government of West Pakistan is contemplating will not have the sort of results which they hope it will have; it will have the opposite result. As hon. Members have

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* While replying to a Calling Attention Notice regarding the trial of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by the military authorities of Pakistan *R.S. Deb.*, 12 August, 1971, cc. 166-69.

** Shri U. Thant.

mentioned here martyrdom does not end something; it begins something. It makes the man immortal and it is always bound to strengthen his cause. These are some of the questions which arise and which we must keep in mind. If hon. Members of the Opposition like, we can sit together and further talk about this matter. As I said, I personally, or the Government has no objection to any of the suggestions that have been made here and I would like to share with them the anxiety which arises in my mind.

Now, hon. Members have rightly pointed out that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman today is not just an individual. Whatever his good qualities or otherwise–I do not know him personally–he has become a symbol of the aspirations, the urges and the hopes of the people of Bangladesh. He is the embodiment of the suffering and the spirit of sacrifice of a very long suffering people, a people who are extraordinarily gifted, sensitive and who have generally been of a more revolutionary mould than many others. So while we must continue all our efforts, if we can think of anything that will have actual effect then we should certainly do it. Nobody can be satisfied with what is happening.

Now, many Members asked about the replies that we got from the various Governments of the world. Most Governments do not want to say exactly what they are doing. They only give an indication that they have taken up this matter or they want to pursue this matter. For them also it is a question not merely of writing to President Yahya Khan or expressing their views, but of trying to find a way which will be effective. We believe that a large number of Governments have taken up this matter, but how effective it is we just do not know. It does not seem to be very effective however much be the pressure. Some Governments are in a position to exert pressure, but whether, in the present circumstances of Pakistan the military regime will want to yield to that pressure, whether they can expect them to yield to that pressure, these are also questions which perhaps they will take into account and make up their mind again.

I would like to make only one point to hon. Members–not strictly concerned with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman or this matter–which is that at all times we should differentiate between the people of Pakistan–Bangladesh, of course, people even who live in the different provinces of West Pakistan–with whom we have no quarrel whatsoever and the military regime which is committing the atrocities in Bangladesh and which is also responsible for the suppression of all political rights of the people of West Pakistan. I do not think I can say very much now. We are aware that the United Nations has not done what it could have. We are aware of its many weaknesses not only on this occasion, but on many other occasions and in other situations, and at that time we have always said that it is only a weakness. Yet we supported it as a body because it is a forum and perhaps there is no other such forum. These are questions of long-term assessment on which views have to be taken. Hon. friend, Shri Gurupadaswamy, rightly mentioned Joan of Arc, where after a summary trial of this sort, after her being burnt at the stake, finally she was practically declared a Saint and then definitely a national heroine. I do not think ultimatums or threats would serve any purpose. If they would serve any purpose we certainly would not hesitate to deliver an ultimatum or to threaten anybody; we will do this, that and the other, but it is for the House to decide whether an ultimatum will achieve any result, whether we could do it to the USA or we could do it to the United Nations or

we could do it to the Commonwealth. However strongly, however acutely, however agonisingly we feel over this question, we have to see that it is not one certainly of using any language and it is not a question of having a constitutional or legal feeling on this question. The only point is what will be effective in trying to save the life of a person whom we feel is today much more than just an individual, even much more, as has been said, than a revolutionary or a fighter for freedom. He has come to symbolise something and the great tragedy of the situation is that it is not merely a tragedy of Bangladesh, which is indeed very grave–the sufferings of the people–but the real tragedy, I think, is the apathy which we see of the other nations to what is happening there. So, I would like to support those Members who have said that on this grave issue we should remain united and have a feeling of solidarity and certainly we should sit together and see if anything more can be done.

India Symbolises the Urge for Peace, Freedom and Justice*

Mr. Deputy Chairman; Sir, I have just returned from a tour of Belgium, Austria, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, France and the Federal Republic of Germany.

The decision to pay official visits to these countries was taken much earlier in response to repeated invitations and in consonance with the practice of reciprocity. The House will remember that President Nixon and Prime Minister Heath had visited our county in 1970. Chancellor Kiesinger in 1969 and President Pompidou when he was Prime Minister. But owing to our general elections, my visit had to be postponed.

In spite of the grave situation in Bangladesh and along our borders in the West Pakistan, I undertook this visit as an earnest of our desire to leave nothing unexplored which might lead to an easing of the burdens imposed upon us and to discourage those who are bent upon finding excuses to threaten our security. It is the complete self-assurance of our people and the unity of all our parties which gave me the confidence to undertake the visit at a time of national danger.

My visit enabled me to exchange ideas with the Heads of Governments and leaders of public opinion at a point of time when important changes were taking place in the world and to put across to them our point of view on matters of world interest, bilateral relations, and more especially on the situation in East Bengal and the threat it is posing to our social, political and economic structure and to peace in this region. Our discussions helped to remove certain misgivings and to focus attention on the root cause of the problem, that is the refusal of the Pakistan military regime to respect the verdict of their own people, the reign of terror let loose by them in Bangladesh and the consequent influx of refugees into India. I think that these countries as well as others realise that it will not help to deal with peripheral problems without finding a political solution in Bangladesh through negotiations with the already elected leaders of the people of East Bengal and in accordance with their legitimate wishes. Most countries also realise that the release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is essential and intend to impress this upon military regime of Pakistan.

After a long period of tragic indifference and sheltering behind the thinly disguised legalistic formulation that it was merely an internal affair of Pakistan, there is now a growing sense of urgency in seeking a solution.

* Statement on Prime Minister's visit abroad, *R.S.Deb.*, 15 November, 1971, cc. 213–17.

Pakistan's efforts to side-track and cloud the basic issue by seeking to involve the United Nations and to transform the struggle of the people of Bangladesh into an Indo-Pakistan confrontation and conflict have been exposed. It is now well understood that India will not be misled by Pakistan's moves and that the military junta in Pakistan must come to terms with the people whom they have treated with such injustices and cruelty. It is also widely appreciated that no country has any right to impose a solution on the people of East Bengal and that force could not suppress the spirit of freedom and nationalism with which they are inspired.

During my visit to the United States, I was informed that a decision had been taken to stop further shipments of arms to Pakistan. A formal announcement has since been made. I was given to understand that no arms are being supplied from the U.K., France and the F.R.G.

It is my earnest hope that joint or several efforts of the stastesmen whom I met will make the military regime in Pakistan realise that no good can come of sabre-rattling or by forcing a military conflict on India. I hope it is not too late for sane counsel to prevail for one cannot go on ignoring hard facts. The just and legitimate aspirations of the people of Bangladesh, indeed of West Pakistan also cannot be ignored and trampled upon.

There was general sympathy for the manner in which we are bearing the heavy burden of looking after over nine million refugees. There have been indications of additions to the funds for giving relief to the refugees. All these countries agree that conditions must be created inside East Bengal to stop the further influx of refugees and to facilitate the return to their homeland in safety and human dignity of those in India.

Having said this I must make it clear that we cannot depend on the inernational community, or even the countries which I visited, to solve our problems for us. We appreciate their sympathy and moral and political support, but the burnt of the burden has to be borne by us and by the people of Bangladesh who have our fullest sympathy and support.

So far as the threat to our security is concerned, we must be prepared–and we are prepared–to the last man and woman, to safeguard our freedom and territorial intergrity. Obviously we cannot take risks such as the withdrawal of our forces from the border unless the situation in Bangladesh is resolved satisfactorily as it poses a serious threat to our security.

Solutions have been found or initiated even to seemingly insoluble peoblmes–as for instance in Europe and between the United States and China–by a wise impulse in men of wisdom and vision. But these developments should not lull us into complacency or wishful thinking.

In Europe there is a welcome spirit of detente, which we hope will soon lead to stable security in that continent. This should have a stabilising influence in Asia and other parts of the world. There was a realisation that political detente should be combined with outword-looking economic policies, especially in regard to the needs of the developing world.

Bilateral economic relations were also discussed with these countries. There was a sympathetic response. Belgium, France and the FRG have shown understanding that there should be a broad outlook in approaching the relations between India and European Economic Community. There are new possibilities of our collaboration in the industrial, technological and scientific fields.

In brief, these are the impressions which I should like to share with hon. Members. I am deliberately not mentioning the leaders of individual countries by name because they were all full of sympathy and friendship for India.

I think my visit also helped to restore our relations with Britian which had suffered a serious setback in 1965.

I should also like to express, on behalf of the Government and the people of India, my sincere thanks to the Governments and peoples of the countries I visited for the warm and friendly reception I received everywhere. I should further like to record my appreciation of the world Press which, by and large, has given a fair and objective account of the events in Bangladesh, of the inexpressible horror let lose upon the people, of the heroic struggle which they are waging in defence of the most elementary democratic rights and liberties.

May I take this opportunity of thanking my people and all the political parties who have shown wisdom and restraint and kept the nation united against any external threat.

...I conclude this statement with a reminder that in the community of nations our country symbolises the urge for peace, freedom and justice. There was a time when ours was a lone voice in a world which was in grip of the cold war. Even in the midst of the grave crisis which the military rulers of Pakistan have created for us, our people, our country, and this great Parliament of the largest democracy in the world have maintained the spirit of peace and of self-restraint. We have refused to be excited by threat or provocation from across our borders. Let us then continue to conduct ourselves with quiet confidence in ourselves so that the world should see and know that India cannot be browbeaten or lulled into a false sense of security. Calmness of spirit and strength go together. India is calm and we are capable of taking decisions in defence of our security and stability.*

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**Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I am not talking about my Statement even though that is the main matter under consideration, because most of the hon'ble Members who spoke, rightly spoke about the question which is uppermost in our minds and which was uppermost in my mind when I went abroad. Whatever I have to say about my tour, I have already stated in my Statement and I do not think any new questions have arisen on that account. Here in this House I see a basic unity of outlook on this issue and I think there is

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* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi, in Lok Sabha also. (*L.S. Deb.*, 15 November, 1971, cc. 242–46.)

** While replying to the discussion on her Statement in the Rajya Sabha on 15 November, 1971 regarding her visit abroad, *R.S. Deb.*, 30 November, 1971, cc. 230–336.

general support also. I should like to thank the hon. Members for the manner in which they have spoken. I should specially like to thank my old friend, Shri Babubhai Chinai and Shri Pranab Kumar Mukherjee who spoke just now with such understanding of the situation. Professor Ruthnaswamy was kind but of course he expressed the typical Swatantra point of view. Shri Mani also–of course I must not forget to mention him.

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Dr. Bhai Mahavir not unexpectedly made some rather carping remarks, which were typical of him. I seem to irritate him and his Party as much as I irritate President Yahya Khan and who does not even–I am not talking of Dr. Mahavir but the other gentleman–like to take my name when he refers to me. Dr. Bhai Mahavir spoke about my projecting a personal image. Now, when one goes abroad, especially as Prime Minister one goes as a representative of the people–any honour that is done to an Indian is an honour to the country and usually another country can only honour a country through somebody, whether he is a scientist or even if he is an ordinary citizen. So, I do not think that if an honour is done to me or if I have been able to project an image, it is certainly not to a person isolated from a country, but as I have said on a previous occasion, it is an honour to the country and what they think the county stands for. So, from that point of view, any houour I received is as important as paying tribute to the country direct. Another remark made by Bhai Mahavir was about our showing restraint at the wrong time. I think some hon. Members were not listening to him as quietly as they should have and he remarked that they were not being patient when they should be patient and the Government was patient when it should not be patient. I agree with him that hon. Members could occasionally show greater patience but I think the Government should always show restraint and patience especially a Government which is sure of itself and sure of its people. I do not think that our friends from across the border have gained much by their lack of patience and by the tone of their statements, their threats and provocations and I think we have gained a great deal by putting all these threats, all these abusive words, if I can put it that way, in their proper perspective; that is, they do not ruffle us, they do not divert us from what we are going to do, what we think is right for our country and they do not rouse our anger in that sense. Of course one is angry, not because of words used; one is angry at what is happening in Bangladesh; one is angry because it seems to us such an unnecessary tragedy. It has taken the lives of millions of people and have uprooted millions of people from their homes . It is not only those who have come to our refugee camps who are uprooted but from what one hears form foreign correspondents and those who have been to Dacca and other parts of Bangladesh the entire country is like a refugee camp; that is, vast masses of the population are moving from village to village, nobody knows who belongs to which village. When they are harassed in one area and when they see an empty village or part of an empty village they may settle down there or they may find that they cannot live there and they move on. So the conditions there are quite chaotic but I would only like to say that the Jan Sangh has its own manner of functioning. They are welcome to it. They have seen I think in the past whether it has brought them honour or success. We have a different way of functioning and we are going to stick to our way which I think is certainly more dignified and gets us better results also.

Now there was one point. I think it was Prof. Ruthnaswamy who said something about the Indo-Soviet Treaty being a handicap in the Prime Minister's baggage. I do not know who is handicapped, it certainly did not handicap me. No foreign official or head of State or head of Government whom I met even mentioned the Treaty. The question was asked at press conferences. Nobody else was at all concerned. I think they understood the situation; people may use these phrases but I do not think anybody really thinks that India has changed her policy or is going to change her policy. In fact my own guess is part of the reason why we irritate other people so much is just this that they find it irritating that here is a Government and people who are not willing to change at their request or at their hint or whatever it is .

Mr. Chatterjee spoke of my concentrating on seeking financial aid for the refugees. This also I explained everywhere I have never asked for financial aid. It was again in reply to questions at Press Conferences that I have said that the help from the international community has been negligible which it has been and I can hardly not answer a simple question like that. I have never asked for help of this kind or another. Neither have I given any advice to foreign Governments. I have said, it is for you to decide what is in your national interests; we cannot expect you to do something which is not in your national interests but we think what is happening here on the sub-continent and its likely consequences will affect peace in Asia and therefore peace in the world. I think all the countries will be affected by it in the long run and it is better they realised the situation and faced up to it now rather than make changes in their policy later on.

Something else Mr. Chatterjee said. I do not know whether I misunderstood him. Did he say that I had said either the Mukti Bahini or those who are fighting were seeking a solution within Pakistan ?

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I am harping on political solution because ultimately the solution when it comes will be a political one. It is not for me anyway. I think you* did say something about my giving advice to the Bangladesh people...

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My point has been that it is only the people of Bangladesh who have the authority to say what they want; I mean they know what they want. I do not think I have the authority to say on their behalf that this is what should be the solution. So far as I am concerned I can give my view, as I did, give my view that they would not now settle for anything less than liberation. I told them very clearly that if any talks are to be held, it should be with the people who have been elected by the public of Bangladesh. By that I did not mean these new people who have come in unopposed by any means. So, we have all along stressed the main and the basic issues involved and tried to draw people's attention to it. Now, it has been Pakistan's consistent effort to try to internationalise the issue and to try to turn it into an Indo-Pak dispute.This is what I had to face everywhere. Everywhere they

* Shri A.P. Chatterjee.

said: If only you will agree to talk to General Yahya Khan, if only your foreign Minister can go or your representative can go, then things will be solved. It is in answer to them that I had to say that they will not be solved because this is not our country and it is only the people of that country who can solve their problems or who can state it. Naturally I had to say that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is their undisputed leader and he is the person who is the most authorised to speak on their behalf, but I did add that in order to voice the opinion of the people of Bangladesh , he must be free. He must be able to know what is happening in Bangladesh. He cannot express an opinion if he has had no knowledge of what has happened and what is happening, as is to be the case. So, this attempt to bring the whole matter to the Security Council, I think, is part of the same game that is, to confuse the realities of the situation and those who are moving in this direction cannot but, be suspect in the eyes of the Indian people.

Kashmir, of course, is as much a part of India as Gujarat or Maharashtra or any other part of the country and any attack there, as any attack anywhere else, will be repulsed and fought with all the strength at our command. The hon. Member* who spoke just before me, has given you, in brief, an account of what happened in the earlier periods, that in both the wars which we have had on the borders of Kashmir in 1947 and in 1965 we did not have adequate forces there, for good reasons. The people, the common people, the Gujjars, the nomadic tribes, the peasants or the other people stood so solidly with us. They brought the first news that the people were coming and doing propaganda against us. They gave all this news. They were the first in the line of resistance and we were able to stand up to those invasions which in the beginning were not obvious invasions. They were hidden because they were infiltrators. Today also aggression is committed on India. As I said in my speeches, there was a new kind of aggression. The Pakistani armies may not have massed on our soil, but it was an invasion, when we have such a large proportion of the population of another country coming on to our soil. It is a kind of invasion. Now, many of them are genuine refugees in diffculties. Nevertheless, the problem that their coming has created does threaten the security of our country and the stability of our country. Amongst them are people who are not genuine refugees. So, from all these points of view, they are threatening our security and, therefore, it is a kind of aggression. Now, we have remained restrained. But we have silenced some Pakistani guns, we have dealt with their tanks and we have brought down some of their intruding aircraft. But we have not poised a counter-threat in any sense of the word. But we cannot allow the annihilation of the people nextdoor to us. I mean, this is what has to be very clearly understood by the world and which I did speak to them. It is not like two equal armies fighting there, the *Mukti Bahini* and the West Pakistan troops. It is a fully equipped army fighting with the people, some of whom have been trained in the East Pakistani Rifles and the East Bangalee Regiment, some of whom have been trained very quickly in the various camps run by the leaders of these two para-military forces. But nevertheless, they are not equal in that way to the army. And it is not in our national interest that an entire people, not just the *Mukti Bahini*, but the entire unarmed population of Bangladesh should be annihilated. Although the threat is

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* Shri Syed Husain.

already great, anything like this happening or even happening partially would increase the threat to our security immediately and also for the future.

On the western side, our armed forces were deployed sometime after the Pakistani troops moved up to our borders . We have not taken any initiative there. But as I said, we shall meet and threat to our freedom or our security and, of course, we feel that the present threat just is not merely threat but a threat to the very foundation on which India is built and on which India is surviving.

Now, there are suggestions you have heard about the withdrawal of troops. I have already explained in the other forum why we cannot withdraw our troops in the west because our lines of communication, the cantonments and so on are so placed that Pakistan has a very great advantage, and having twice been taken unawares by Pakistan in this very area, in Kashmir and so on, we cannot afford that risk. But I would certainly welcome the withdrawal of troops and I think the troops that should be withdrawn straightaway are the Pakistani troops in Bangladesh. They are far from their homes, they are also suffering and I think that they should be taken back to rejoin their families and friends in West Pakistan. And this would be a positive response from Pakistan to show that they do want a solution in Bangladesh. It would be a gesture for peace. And I do feel that in today's circumstances, the very presence of Pakistani troops in Bangladesh, as I said earlier, is a threat to our own security.

I think that I have answered most of the points. So far as the present situation is concerned, as you know, the *Mukti Bahini* is facing very courageously, it is a very difficult fight they are fighting very bravely, and they have our good wishes, and they have our support also. Nobody can predict what the future will bring but as I have said on an earlier occasion, nothing is going to ease the situation immediately. No matter what happens, what steps we take, the next month will be of very great difficulty to us and also to the people of Bangladesh. I mean we have to know there is no solution, which is a magic solution, which will end the suffering of the refugees or end the burdens on us. This just cannot happen with the best will in the world. I am glad that this unity has been shown. Shri Chatterjee spoke something about our singling out his party and so on. I can assure him that it is not at all our intention. But certain things had happened in West Bengal. I am glad that the situation has improved greatly and once there is peace there will be no course for anybody to be poised against anybody else, and this is the time when all parties should unite, because, as I said, the burden on the Indian people is very great and the challenge and the difficulties we face are extremely difficult, and they will need all the strength we have, all the resources we have and all the unity and determination which we can bring to bear upon. I have full confidence that all parties will respond to this challenge and together we will be able to come out of what is a dark period for us and for the people of Bangladesh . We will come out of it and they will be able to make a new life for themselves. Thank you.

Recognition to Bangladesh*

The valiant struggle of the people of Bangladesh in the face of tremendous odds has opened a new chapter of heroism in the histroy of freedom movements.

Earlier, they had recorded a great democratic victory in thier elections and even the President of Pakistan had conceded the right of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to become Prime Minister of Pakistan. We shall never know what intervened to transform this benevolent mood and realistic approach, if it really was that, to deception and the posture of open hatred.

We are told that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his party , the Awami League, had planned a non-violent movement of resistance to the Government of West Pakistan. But they were caught unawares and overtaken by a brutal military assault. They had no alternative but to declare for imdependence. The East Pakistan Rifles and East Bengal Regiment became the *Mukti fauj* and later the *Mukti Bahini*, which was joined by thousands of young East Bengalies, determined to sacrifice their lives for freedom and the right to fashion their future. The unity, determination and courage with which the entire population of Bangladesh is fighting have been recorded by the world press.

These events on our doorstep and the resulting flood of refugees into our territory could not but have far-reaching repercussions on our country. It was natural that our sympathy should be with the people of Bangladesh in their just struggle. But we did not act precipitately in the matter of recognition. Our decisions were not guided merely by emotion but by an assessment of prevailing and future realities.

With the unanimous revolt of the entire people of Bangladesh and the success of their struggle it has become increasingly apparent that the so called mother State of Pakistan is totally incapable of bringing the people of Bangladesh back under its control. As for the legitimacy of the Government of Bangladesh, the whole world is now aware that it reflects the will of the overwhelming majority of the people, which not many governments can claim to represent. In Jefferson's famous words to Governor Morris, the Government of Bangladesh is supported by the "will of the nation, substantially expressed". Applying this criterion, the Military regime in Pakistan, whom some States are so anxious to buttress, is hardly representative of its people even in West Pakistan.

Now that Pakistan is waging war against India, the normal hesitation on our part not to do anything which could come in the way of a peaceful solution, or which might be

* Statement regarding recognition to Bangladesh, *L.S.Deb.*, 6 December, 1971, cc.16-19.

construed as intervention, has lost significance. The people of Bangladesh battling for their very existence and the people of India fighting to defeat aggression now find themselves partisans in the same cause.

I am glad to inform the House that in the light of the existing situation and in response to the repeated requests of the Government of Bangladesh, the Government of India have after the most careful consideration. decided to grant recognition to the Gana Praja Tantrik Bangladesh.

It is our hope that with the passage of time more nations will grant recognition and that the Gana Praja Tantrik Bangladesh will soon form part of the family of nations.

Our thoughts at this moment are with the father of this new State–Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. I am sure that this house would wish me to convey to thier Excellencies the Acting President of Bangladesh and the Prime Minister and to their colleagues, our greetings and warm felicitations.

I am placing on the Table of the House copies of the communications* which we have received from the Government of Bangladesh. Hon. Members will be glad to know that the Government of Bangladesh have proclaimed their basic principles of State policy to be democracy, socialism, secularism and the establishment of an egalitarian society in which there would be no discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex or creed. In regard to foreign relations, the Bangladesh Government have expressed their determination to follow a policy of non-alignment, peaceful co-existence and opposition to colonialism, racialism and imperialism in all its manifestations. These are the ideals to which India also is dedicated.

The Bangladesh Government have reiterated their anxiety to organise the expeditious return of their citizens who have found temporary refuge in our country, and to restore their lands and belongings to them. We shall naturally help in every way in these arrangements.

I am confident that in future the Government and the peoples of India and Bangladesh, who share common ideals and sacrifices, will forge a relationship based on the principles of mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit. Thus working together for freedom and democracy, we shall set an example of good neighbourliness which alone can ensure peace, stability and progress in this region. Our good wishes to Bangladesh.**

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* 1. Letter dated 24 April, 1971 from Mr. Syed Nazrul Islam, Acting President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the President of the Republic of India alongwith a copy of the Proclamation of Independence, Laws Continuance Enforcement Order and a list of Cabinet members; and

2. Letters dated 15 October, 1971, 23 November, 1971 and 4 December, 1971 from Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the Prime Minister of India.

** The Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi made an identical Statement in Rajya Sabha also. (*R.S. Deb.*, 6 December, 1971, cc. 23–26.)

Friendship, Co-operation and Peace Between India and Bangladesh*

I have the honour to lay on the Table of the House texts of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Peace and of the Joint Declaration which Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and I signed at Dacca on 19 March, 1972.

I should like to emphasise that the Treaty embodies the will of the two Governments to pursue common policies in matters of interest to both countries and solemnises the close ties friendship between our two countries and peoples cemented through blood and sacrifice. The Treaty and the Declaration will guide us on our journey into the future in quest of peace, good neighbourliness and the well being of our two peoples.

The joint Declaration emphasises the importance of close coordination and cooperation between the two countries in trade and payments, economic development and transit. I should like to invite the attention of hon. Members to that portion of the Declaration which deals with the exciting prospect of harnessing the waters of Brahmaputra, Meghna and Ganga to the benefit of the two peoples.

It is our earnest hope that the Treaty which affirms our common goals and ideals and reiterates our firm adherence to the policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence, will lead to lasting peace and co-operation not only between India and Bangladesh but in the sub-continent and the region as a whole.

* Statement regarding the "Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Peace with Bangladesh" and the Joint Declaration of the Prime Ministers of India and Bangladesh, *L.S. Deb.*, 20 March, 1972, cc. 239-40.

Crisis in East Bengal*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, we have watched the happenings in Pakistan earlier, that is, the election in East Bengal with great admiration and hope; hope that it was the beginning of a new future for the whole country, a future which would make them more united and strong. But, as my colleague, Sardar Saheb, has said, far from leading into this brightness they have turned along a dark path, a tragic path, bringing suffering—in fact, perhaps, suffering is too small a word—to an entire people. I am sure hon. Members will appreciate that however heavy our hearts may be, however deeply we may be sharing the agony of the people there, it is not possible for the Government to speak in the same words as hon. Members can do. In fact, it is because we are so deeply conscious of the historic importance of this moment that we are, at the same time, aware of the seriousness of the situation when a wrong step, a wrong word, can have an effect entirely different form the one which we all just intend. The House is aware that we have to act within certain international norms.

It is good to see that the Parties here have expressed certain views. For instance, the Swatantra Party has expressed admiration for the socialist programme of Shri Mujibur Rahman. The Jan Sangh has supported his secular policy and have also said that the people of East Bengal are their brothers. I hope they will extend the same sympathy to all the people of our own country too. As I said earlier, we are not unaware of what is taking place in East Bengal and of what it means to the people there and also of the danger that it holds for us, not for any one part of our country, but for the entire country. So we are interested in this matter for many reasons, firstly as one Member** has said, that Shri Mujibur Rahman has stood for the values which we ourselves cherish, the values of democracy, the values of secularism and the values of socialism. We are also concerned with the truly wonderful and unique way in which the people there had stood behind him and supported these values. We are no less full of sorrow and grave concern and even agony at what is happening in East Bengal, but I can only appeal to the hon. Members that this is not the moment when the Government can say anything more. Whatever the Government may or may not be able to do, it would not be wise for this to become a matter for public debate. I do not think that hon. Members expect us to give replies to the various questions which were asked. I think the purpose of this discussion was more for us to know

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* Replying to clarifications sought by Members on the Statement made by Sardar Swaran Singh, Minister of External Affairs on developments in Pakistan, *R.S. Deb.*, 27 March, 1972, cc. 148-49.

** Shri Chitta Basu.

their minds and hear their suggestions. As hon. Members know, I held a meeting this morning with the Leaders of the Opposition parties, which practice, I hope, to continue. We are as closely in touch with the happenings in East Bengal as is possible in the present situation. I hope to keep closely in touch with the Leaders of the Opposition as well as other Members who would like to come and meet me so that we can know their mind. We cannot always, I must admit, give our mind but we will certainly tell them as much as is possible to do.

Indo-Soviet Friendship*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of USSR, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Soviet Union His Excellency Mr. Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev visited India from December 8–11. This was a visit to which both India and the USSR attached great importance and one which was in response to an invitation which he had extended to him in Belgrade last May. The visit was significant also because of international and regional situations. I had several opportunities of having detailed talks with the Soviet leader on various matters of mutual interest. At the end of the visit we signed a Joint Declaration. A copy of that declaration has already been placed on the Table of the House.

We in India value our friendship with the Soviet Union which goes to even before our Independence. I participated in the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution in Moscow. Years earlier my father had gone to the Soviet Union as a representative of the Indian National Congress at its 10th anniversary. The friendship which has since developed is a multifaceted one which has benefited the peoples of the two countries and has contributed to world peace and stability. The socio-economic systems of our two countries are different but we do share a common and abiding commitment to the strengthening of world peace.

It was a good augury that the Soviet President should visit India in a year which marks the silver jubilee of Indo-Soviet economic cooperation. President Brezhnev is an old friend of India and has been here in 1961 and 1973. In many ways he has been the architect of the edifice of Indo-Soviet Friendship. President Brezhnev was accompanied by a distinguished delegation amongst whom were Foreign Minister Gromyko and First Deputy Prime Minister Arkhipov, who are also our friends of long standing.

We discussed a large number of questions especially those of direct concern to our countries. We both agreed on the need for a climate of peace and co-operation in our neighbourhood and for making determined efforts towards this end by all concerned. For, indeed, Indo-Soviet relations are not against any third country. It is a friendship that we both value greatly and in our pursuit of good neighbourly relations, we ensure that Indo-Soviet relations are not adversely affected. More than words, our deeds bear out the truth of this assertion.

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* Statement on the visit to India of Mr. L.I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, *R.S. Deb.*, 15 December, 1980, cc. 313–20.

On the bilateral side our discussions were focussed on the further strengthening of the co-operation between our two countries. An agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation which I signed with President Brezhnev provides a framework for this. The Soviet Union has agreed to cooperate with India in three very important sectors–power, coal mining and oil exploration. This is over and above the traditional cooperation in ferrous metallurgy, more specifically the expansion of Bhilai and Bokaro and the erection of a new integrated steel plant at Vishakhapatnam. The two sides have identified some specific projects which were left out of the 6th Plan because of lack of resources. Thanks to an offer of Soviet credit of Roubles 520 million—Slightly under Rs. 520 crore—these will now be taken up during the next 4 to 6 years. They will contribute significantly to the further strengthening of India's industrial sinews. Three more Agreements were signed during the visit:—

(1) Trade Agreement.

(2) Protocol on Co-operation in the field of cinematography.

(3) Programme of Cultural, Scientific and Educational Exchanges for the years 1981-82.

Hon. Members will be glad to hear that in response to our request the Soviet Union has agreed to increase its supplies of crude oil to India from the current level of 1.5 million tonnes to 2.5 million tonnes annually and of oil products from 1.9 million tonnes to 2.25 million tonnes annually for the next five years. This will be against additional exports from India and will substantially boost our two-way trade. We appreciate this friendly gesture.

Our discussions on international relations covered the world situation in general and affairs in our region in some detail. On the Indian Ocean and on the continuing conflict between Iran and Iraq, there was a close proximity of views.

On Afghanistan the views of the Soviet Union with which the hon. Members are already familiar, were reiterated by President Brezhnev. On our part we made our perceptions clear and conveyed our serious concern. We expressed our opposition to all forms of outside interference in the internal affairs of other countries whether through the induction of regular troops or through infiltration and our view that all such interference should stop in order to make possible a political solution.

Both sides agreed that there is no alternative to a peaceful political solution to the problems in South West Asia as well as to other situations wherever they may arise. The Soviet leader expressed the hope that India would continue to play her constructive role in defusing the situation and in helping to find peaceful political solutions.

Continuing tensions and growing conflicts in our region have given outside forces an opportunity to exploit these tensions to their advantage. Recent years have seen a revival of efforts by certain non-littoral great powers to increase or consolidate their military presences in the Indian Ocean. There is much activity in building existing bases and in acquiring new bases and facilities. We have ourselves been demanding that the entire Indian

Ocean should be freed of great power presences so that it can become a zone of peace. The people of Asia and Africa can ill-afford embroilment in this international power game which seems to be the beginning of a new cold war. We have shared our concern frankly with our Soviet friends.

We have not looked upon the situation in South-West Asia in isolation, either as a situation affecting this or that country or only a group of countries. These tensions are related to regional and global situations. The great powers have special responsibility in bringing about general and positive improvement in relations on a global scale and in this context the proposals made by President Brezhnev in his address to the hon. Member appear constructive and worthy of careful consideration.

The soviet leaders made no secret of their concern with the new escalating tensions in Europe and the stalemate in Central European disarmament negotiations. Hon. Members will recall that the two World Wars the most devastating conflicts mankind has ever known began on the continent of Europe. It is, therefore, imperative that peace prevails in Europe. The process of detente in Europe contributed to the acceptance of post-war realities and the promotion of mutual confidence and cooperation. We hope that this process will recover from its recent setbacks and will be strengthened and extended to other regions of the globe.

The visit of the Soviet President has afforded us a valuable opportunity of reaffirming the strength and vitality of Indo-Soviet relations. These relations are based on trust and mutuality of interest and have therefore stood the test of time. Even though we may occasionally have different perceptions on some specific event our friendship will prosper and we can continue to cooperate between ourselves and with other like-minded countries in our dedication to the maintenance and strengthening of world peace.*

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The hon. Member who spoke just now, Shrimati Purabi Mukherjee seems to have replied on my behalf.** I appreciate it. As she said, in joint declaration we usually mention the areas of agreement. We have made our view on Afghanistan clear on all occasions, and again in the statement which I have just read out I have clarified the slight difference of opinion. I do not think that the presence or absence of a particular word means anything. Interference and intervention, as you know, are more or less the same. I think our meaning is clear to them and to us.

President Brezhnev did clarify the Soviet view on Poland. This matter came up later when the Foreign Minister spoke here. A Soviet spokesman has denied reports that Soviet troops marched into Poland.

So far as the geographical position of South West Asia is concerned, one has only to look at the map. The southern part of West Asia is South West Asia. We use this phrase rather than the Western phrase, Middle East. Middle East has no meaning. It just depends

* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi in Lok Sabha also. (*L.S. Deb.*, 15 December, 1980, cc. 326-30.)

** Replies were sought by Shri Jaswant Singh.

from where you look. If you take Asia you know what is on the west and what is on the east. That is why we have used this phrase.

So far as the question of the language I used is concerned,* had the function been held in the Red Fort I would have spoken in Hindi. On looking at the audience it seemed that a large part of the audience did not know Hindi. As there was another Hindi speech there, I thought it would be better for me to speak in English.

My views on Hindi are well known. While I am all for the propagation of Hindi, I am not for its imposition on anybody.

* Referring to the suggestion in this regard by Shri Shiv Chandra Jha.

Situation in Lebanon*

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the House is aware of the tragic situation that has developed in West Asia. Our Government have consistently reaffirmed their stand through the years. We have always supported the cause of the Palestinians and, in fact, even when Mahatma Gandhi was there, he and my father and other leaders had realised the consequences of displacing the Palestinians from their homeland.

Well, that was almost before my time**. So our stand continues to be the same. Now the situation has become much more dangerous and much more threatening to us as well as to the values and the ideals and the policies for which we have stood and for which we have worked. Now I shall read the statement.

The unprovoked Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the brutal killing of thousands of Lebanese and Palestinian civilians has aroused deep anguish and revulsion in the entire world community. This Israeli action is a flagrant violation of all canons of international law and behaviour. It is indicative of an arrogance which has shown callous disregard for the rights of other nations and peoples.

Since the invasion on June 6, the efforts of the International Community to secure vacation of aggression have made no progress, as Israel continues to defy counsels of restraint. It has callously ignored the unanimous Resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the Resolution adopted by the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The Israeli blockade of West Beirut is now being further tightened. Many hundred thousand residents are totally deprived of essential supplies of water, electricity, food and medical assistance. The entire civilian population is being starved out. The cease-fire, such as it is, is fragile and precarious. Beirut could well be totally destroyed and its population annihilated. This unabashed use of force is totally contrary to all norms and tenets of international behaviour. Israel's cynical and contemptuous disregard of international opinion, its continuing aggression and its use of military means to seek political objective provide a very sad precedent for the future.

At a time when there were hopes for some progress in the resolution of the Palestinian problem, Israel has chosen to exacerbate it, thus imperilling the possibilities of long-term

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* Making a Statement regarding the crisis in Lebanon, *R.S. Deb.*, 9 July 1982, cc 288-90, 298-302.

** Responding to Shri Ramamurthi's remark, "As early as in 1919 we raised it".

stability in the sensitive and strategic West Asian region. Israeli attempts to wipe out the Palestinian Movement cannot succeed in the long run. A popular movement, based on the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people, cannot be put down by use of arms. History is replete with instances of the failure of military force to crush popular movements. Israel will be well advised to pay heed to the growing world-wide vocal concern, including the voices of thousands of its own people who have demonstrated against this invasion of Lebanon.

On behalf of my Government, I should like to call upon nations who are in a position to influence Israel to take immediate steps to lift the siege of West Beirut and withdraw its troops to its own territory. After this immediate objective is achieved, negotiations must begin for a just, comprehensive and durable solution acceptable to all concerned. Such a solution must ensure the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to an independent nation-state.*

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Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am glad that all hon. Members who have spoken have supported the statement. Some of them have asked to me to name the instigator. Now, frankly, Sir, I do not think that Israel needs to be instigated. They have their hawks. We know their policy and we know how they have been proceeding. It is true that they are emboldened by the support they get from powerful elements outside.

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America, certainly**. Some weeks ago I wrote to President Reagon on this issue. I have written also to President Brezhnev and to President Mitterand, I thought that these people could do something about the matter. We are also in touch with other Heads of State and our Foreign Minister is in touch, through diplomatic channels, with others. The non-aligned group is as active as it can be. They are having a ministerial level meeting, for which the date, the venue, etc. are being discussed. This is a situation when I feel sorry that we are not more powerful. We are doing whatever we can, what is in our power to do. We were the first, and may be, even the only country which immediately sent a medical team, as soon as we learnt about the casualties and injured. But already, at that time, it was difficult for the team to enter the areas of Beirut where medical help was most needed. However, they were able to render service to the wounded who were just outside Beirut or who had been evacuated to Syria and to other parts. We also sent, to the extent of our capacity, blankets and medicines which the PLO had asked for. We have heard that the International Red Cross is not allowed to go there. There is nothing much more that we can do except to approach and persuade, and this we have been doing. The Indian Red Cross has sent a gift of 10 surgical units, each comprising 3 to 5 tonnes of equipment.

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* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi in Lok Sabha also, (*L.S. Deb.*, 9 July, 1982, cc. 347-48.)

** Responding to Shri Shiv Chandra Jha's query, "America"?

These are being airlifted to Geneva and to Cyprus from where they will go to Lebanon. These gifts are made over to the Palestinian Red Cross and the Lebanese Red Cross for use by their medical teams.

It is true that the non-aligned movement and the United Nations itself have not been as effective as we would have hoped to be. All we can do is to keep urging them to try to achieve unity amongst the developing countries, amongst the Group of 77 and amongst all these people who believe in the same ideals. In this particular matter, we need unity amongst those who are supporting the cause of the Palestinians. Unfortunately disunity is lessening our effectiveness. Even if we were united, the powers that are against us would still be much stronger. What is emerging—it is still very much at an initial stage—is world opinion. The general public must be...aroused in all countries. This matter does not concern just the Arabs or the Muslims. Some people have said that our policy is dictated by sectional interests. We are not pressurised by anybody. We have looked at this question from the larger perspective and our party, the Congress Party, and we as individuals were deeply concerned with the plight of the Jews in Europe and for what they had suffered throughout their long history and especially the worst part of it in Hitler's Germany, when millions of Jews were exterminated. They had our fullest sympathy and also admiration, because in spite of that hardship and harassment, so many of them rose to the top in every field of activity. When Israel was formed, our Leaders, Mahatmaji, my father and others, sympathised fully with the Jews. But they realised that the manner in which Israel was brought into being could only lead to conflict and tension. The problem had been a purely European problem. There was no Palestinian problem. The Jews, the Arabs and the Christians were living peacefully and in harmony for hundreds of years in Jerusalem and Palestine. The problem was European one. It existed even before Hitler. The Jews were thrown out of their homes and villages. They were killed and harassed. Suddenly, the powers to be picked this problem up from Europe and transplanted it in an area where there had hitherto been peace and harmony. Now, the Jewish problem has disappeared from Europe but is critical on Palestine, since hundreds and thousands of people were displaced and forced to seek refuge elsewhere. This has created hardship, bitterness and hatred. Mahatmaji and others realized this. The hon. Member opposite has reminded us. I was only one and half year's old at that time. The reason why we did not support the United Nations resolution was that while sympathising with the plight of the Jews, we felt that it was not possible to solve the problem of one group of people by creating a similar problem for another group. So, we are trying to do whatever we can by speaking to people and by meeting people. The Ambassador of the P.L.O. here is keeping us in touch with developments.

An hon. Member has spoken about Indians fighting in Lebanon. Perhaps hon. Members have seen the contradiction that was issued immediately. There are Indians in Lebanon. So far as we are aware they are not involved in the fighting. They have gone there for work.

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It is not a question of wrong or right*. So far as our information goes, there are no Indian soldiers. But the hon. Member knows that much of the aerial bombing was an civilian quarters. The bombs have fallen on hospitals, on schools, on the living quarters of workers and others. So, if some Indians have fought in self-defence—this is a guess work on my part—that is an understandable situation.

An hon. Member has remarked on his visit to the socialist countries and informed the House that they were all looking to me to do something. I should like to remind him that the socialist countries are much stronger than we are militarily and technologically. In any move to solve this critical problem, we shall be glad to help in whatever way it is possible for us. But the socialist countries themselves should know that while they are looking to me, their friends and allies in India are looking the other way and doing their best to prevent me from functioning effectively.

* Replying to Shri Kalyan Roy's observation, "What is wrong there ? We have fought in the Spanish Civil War ?"

Israeli Invasion of Lebanon*

Sir, no event in recent years has pained and shocked humankind as the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, atrocities committed there, specially brutal, heartless and merciless massacre of the civilian population.

What is a matter of even greater shame is the state of helplessness of the international community in dealing with a Member of the United Nations who has unabashedly invaded another Member State. The Security Council has passed unanimous resolution calling for a ceasefire and withdrawal. These have been arrogantly ignored. World leaders have condemned these actions. This has had no impact on Israel. While withdrawing its military presence from West Beirut, the PLO was guaranteed protection of the Palestinian civilian population. Nevertheless, over 1000 defenseless men, women and children were massacred in a manner reminiscent of atrocities committed during World War II. Even those who have been sympathetic to Israel and people in Israel itself are protesting against such deeds. We have heard of PLO prisoners being tortured in Israel.

As hon. Members are well aware, there has been massive public sympathy in India for the unimaginable sufferings of the Palestinian people. Our hearts and sympathies go out to them. Their lands were forcibly occupied. They are homeless, having been driven out of their hearths and homes. For over three decades theirs has been a life of humiliation, misery and sufferings.

We view this Israeli aggression and their acts of genocide with abhorrence. We have made our views known in public, at the United Nations, and in many chancelleries of the world. I have written to several world leaders. I have personally spoken to others whom I have met since the Israeli aggression. If universally accepted norms of international law and behaviour are to be observed and respected as they must be, then due value must be placed on human life and property whether in Europe, America, Africa or Asia and global peace, stability and security must not be further jeopardised. We have to work collectively for a just, equitable and durable solution.

A sense of urgency is also involved. A very heavy price has been paid in the form of military destruction, loss of human lives and sufferings of hundreds of thousands of helpless human beings. Even today the atmosphere in West Asia is increasingly surcharged with emotions of anger and hatred, of revenge and reprisals. All this must be ended. The use of force never brought any lasting solution. Destruction and killing is self-defeating. The

* Making a Statement regarding the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, *R.S. Deb*, 5 October, 1982, cc. 317-20, 328-31.

interest of all people is to live in an atmosphere of cooperation and friendship. We cannot covet or retain what does not belong to us. We must not deny to others their rights and what is theirs. Lands forcibly occupied must, therefore, be vacated. Peoples who have been uprooted and rendered homeless must be rehabilitated and provided a state of their own. Countries in the region must be assured of their security within internationally recognised frontiers.

Therefore we appeal to all, particularly those in a position to influence Israel, to spare no effort in prevailing upon Israel to withdraw from Lebanon without delay. This must be the first step in a long process of finding a solution to the larger problem. Our foremost priority must be to work collectively in initiating a new peace process towards a comprehensive and final settlement.

The tragedy of Lebanon has been grafted on the tragedy of Palestine. The UN Peace Keeping Forces and others are there. There exist several resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly and lately we have also had some noteworthy plans and proposals. We welcome any effort towards a peaceful settlement. We have to initiate and encourage trends of conciliation and negotiations. The parties directly involved, which must include the PLO, need to play a major role. These efforts should also have the full involvement and support of the super powers. I should like to assure hon. Members that India will not be found wanting in this regard*.

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Sir, first of all I shall deal with the last question which is about the Non-aligned Conference schedule to be held here**. The question was whether in this Conference we would take some positive steps. I am sure hon. Members will realise that it would not be proper for me to commit the Conference to any stand now. I think we can guess what the unanimous view would be, but it would still not be right for me to speak of it before the countries express their own views at the Conference. As Chairman of the Conference it has to be our task to keep the movement cohesive and strong, and to try to take it in the direction which we consider correct, but we have to consider the views of others also.

Sir, we do not equate all the Powers. If the hon. Member will recall my statement, when I say "full involvement and support" I do not mean that both the super powers are involved in what is happening in West Asia, but that without the support no steps or efforts for peace can succeed and this applies not only to them, but to the whole world. However,

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* An identical Statement was made by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi in Lok Sabha also, *(L.S. Deb.*, 5 October, 1982, cc 426-28)

** Replying to the questions asked/clarifications sought by the members. Some of these were as follows : Shri P. Ramamurti blamed United States of America for Israeli invasion of Palestine. Shri Shridhar Wasudeo Dhabe enquired about the steps taken by the Indian Government to protect Indian prisoners in Israel. Shri Dinesh Goswami felt that the atrocities could not be properly reflected in our media. He suggested that Government might do something so that these things would be adequately projected by the media. Shri Gulam Mohi-ud-din Shawl wanted to know about the positive steps that the Government proposed to suggest to the non-aligned forum. Shri Sourendra Bhattacharjee referring to the concluding portion of the statement said that the super-powers had been placed at the same level in the statement and suggested that there should be a specific and categorical pronouncement.

being the bigger powers with greater strength, the support of the Super Powers to any peace move is essential. We do know that Israel has received considerable help and encouragement from the United States but at least now the United States is condemning Israel's latest actions. We can only hope that they will take some action on this.

I believe that when the news of the capture of Indians appeared in our newspapers, it was contradicted. So far as I know, no Indians were involved in the fighting. There were some civilian detenues. I have not heard of any U.S. personnel manning Israel's aircraft.

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Hon. Members know that we ourselves are supporters of the Palestinian cause from the very beginning. Hon. Member, Shri Ramamurti has drawn attention to an earlier time. The Congress was loudest in its support to the sufferings of the Jews and we have raised our voice against their oppression and persecution in Europe, but we had clearly pointed out that the manner in which the State of Israel was created, establishing a new State in the place of an existing one, displacing a large population, would not only give rise to problems and sufferings for those who were displaced, but would create very serious problems for the whole world, and this is what, in fact, has happened. We gave our full support to the P.L.O. cause bilaterally and in international organisations. When the present trouble started, we sent a medical team. One team went on behalf of the Government. Another was planned by our party but when we heard that they would not be allowed into Beirut, it did not leave. Our team stayed for two months. We gave financial assistance as well as medicines, medical equipment, blankets and so on, for about Rs. 30 lakh. Apart from that we have contributed to the U.N. Fund for Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for refugees.

In fact, we gave whatever we were asked for. We were in touch with Mr. Arafat, and what we could give, we gave. They have expressed appreciation of our support in quite clear terms.

Somebody spoke about Indian M.Ps. going to Israel. I have not heard of this. I believe you all know that there is one M.P. who takes such a stand. He does not belong to our party. If you have any influence, you should exert it on him not to go to Israel.

So far as sanctions or boycott of Israel is concerned, as you know we have no connection with them at all. So the question of boycott does not arise.

I think I have answered all the questions.

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I am sorry to say that I do not watch it*. I am not at all aware of this. But you have raised a valid point and perhaps even now it is not too late for our media to get hold of a

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* Replying to Shri Dinesh Goswami's intervention, "I spoke about our media".

film and show it. I will suggest this to them. We have done our utmost to mobilise world opinion on this matter. As I said earlier, wherever I have been, I have spoken, and I have written letters not only on the issue of Lebanon and the Paletinians but on the larger aspect of world peace. This is a high ideal which we believe is an Indian ideal. It is also a practical necessity for us to enable us to get ahead with our development plans, to serve our people and to give them better standards of living.

Visit to Libya and Tunisia*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hon. Members know of the proposal for my visits to Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt. This was in response to invitations which had been extended and accepted a long time ago. Libya and Tunisia have not been visited by any Indian President or Prime Minister, and they have been reminding us that such visits were overdue.

These four are important members of the world community and prominent in the Non-Aligned Movement. We have had always close relations with them and have shared assessments with them on important international developments. We also have increasing mutually advantageous economic relations with these countries. The object of my visits was to strengthen our bilateral relations as also to discuss course of action regarding the deterioration of the situation in West Asia and elsewhere. Inspite of the importance of the subjects to be discussed, since the House is in session and events in our country need close watch, the stay in each country was anyhow to be very short, a day or two in each capital.

Owing to the situation in Punjab, we did consider postponment of these visits. However, it was felt that it was too late to cancel the visits to Libya and Tunisia which are to begin tomorrow. It has now been decided to visit these two countries from the 7th to 9th April and to postpone the visits to Algeria and Egypt for the time being.

The Governments of Algeria and Egypt have been most understanding and have agreed to my coming at a later date soon. We are grateful to them for their helpfulness.

The House knows that wherever I am, I am kept in constant touch with developments at home and receive all essential papers. It is my sincere hope that all sections of the people of Punjab will work together for countering the distrust and violence.

It will be my privilege to carry the greetings and good wishes of the Indian people and of their elected representatives in this august House to the Governments and peoples of Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Republic of Tunisia.

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* Making a Statement regarding her forthcoming visit to certain foreign countries, *L.S. Deb.*, 6 April, 1984, cc. 537-39.

10

MEDIA

Freedom of the Press*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am glad to see the widespread interest in this measure. Wherever I have gone in the last few weeks, I have been questioned about it. Most of the newspapers have commented on it editorially, and the fact that the government of India have brought back the Bill, which was shelved ten years ago, is indicative of the great importance which we attach to it.

In the long debate which took place in the Rajya Sabha, many opposing viewpoints were put forward and criticisms were made of some of the provisions of the Bill but, so for as I can remember, not a single Member opposed the Bill.

The setting up of a Press Council was an important, perhaps the most crucial, recommendation of the Press Commission. It was felt at that time that the sooner the Press Commission was set up the better it would be for the profession of journalism, for the newspapers themselves and for the democratic process to which we all attach so much importance. Democracy, as we know, entails the balancing of the rights and privileges with duties and responsibilities. In a totalitarian set up the people and press are regulated by Government, but in a democracy the society must regulate itself. So, ideally, a code of conduct should grow from within and should be sustained by internal sanctions. But, so far as I know, neither on the part of the profession of journalism, nor of the newspaper industry, have we witnessed any such attempt at self-regulation. Nor have we noticed any move towards a code of conduct, especially in curbing restrictive and unfair practices.

I hope hon. Members will not misunderstand me. I have had my share of bouquets and brick-bats from newspapers of the right, the left and the centre, as well as from those who are not supposed to have any politics at all. I bear them no grudge and I would like to give credit where it is due. As newspapers go, our newspapers in India are of a high level, but cases do occur of breaches of accepted standards. So, the need for some machinery of self-regulation is self-evident.

I am not unaware of the dangers inherent in this situation. Freedom of expression is a fundamental right but it is also one which can be easily abused. Lamartine said :

> When the press is the echo of sages and reformers, it works well; when it is the echo of turbulent cynics, it merely feeds political excitement.

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* Participating (as the Minister of Information and Broadcasting) in the discussion on the Motion regarding the Joint Committee on the Press Council Bill, 1963, *L.S. Deb.*, 30 September, 1964, cc. 4588-92.

Similarly, Benjamin Franklin wrote :

> If by the liberty of the press, we understand merely the liberty of discussing the propriety of public measures and political opinions, let us have as much of it as you please; but, if it means the liberty of affronting, calumniating, and defaming one another, I own myself willing to part with my share of it whenever our legislators shall please to alter the law; and shall cheerfully consent to exchange my liberty of abusing others for the privilege of not being abused myself.

Some newspapers, while writing about this Bill, have commented that the regulations can be misinterpreted in the wrong hands. But that is true of any law or regulation. Yet, we cannot do without laws; Civilization consists of the individual's voluntary acceptance of certain curbs on his behaviour and his desires. No civilized society can exist, or live an ordered life without regulations. For, while each man wants to be free, it is society's duty to see that his freedom does not impinge on the freedom of others.

In this Bill an effort has been made to safeguard the rights of the press and to protect its freedom of expression. We do hope that the new law will promote healthy traditions of journalism. If there are any lacunae or wrong trends, the proposed Joint Committee will no doubt look into them and correct them. Government have no other desire than to provide the best possible and the most carefully devised machinery for self-regulation.

An important question is how freedom of the press and of the journalistic profession can operate within the framework of an industry. The Press Council will have to deal with both these aspects: with professional matters as well as with the future of the industry.

Some hon. Members have spoken of the growing concentration and the monopolistic tendencies. These tendencies are not good anywhere. But in India, where most of the large newspapers are not only in a foreign language but emanate from cities which are unrepresentative of the vast majority of our population, there is the grave danger that the viewpoint and self-interest of an exceedingly small section of society may be presented authoritatively as the voice of the people. These tendencies can be checked only by assuring free and fair competition and by lending a helping hand to small and medium-size papers. The other day there was a conference in Delhi of such newspapers and a long list of demands was presented. I certainly hope that Shri Diwakar's Committee which is dealing with this matter, will go into these problems thoroughly and give us practicable suggestions for ameliorating the difficulties of the smaller newspapers.

Sir, I do not wish to go into details. But one thing is certain, that to serve any useful purpose, the Press Council must be invested with dignity and authority, so that it cannot be brought into contempt and so that it is respected by the Press as a whole. The recommendation that the Chief Justice of India should nominate the Chairman is to ensure that the Chairman should be a person of high integrity and impartiality and preferably of high judicial experience and expertise in assessing evidence.

In the difficult times through which our country is passing the press has to remember its vast social responsibility. It is my fervent hope that the proposed Press Council will be

a means to that end. It is with this desire that Government have introduced this Bill and seek to carry it through with whatever changes may be deemed necessary by the Joint Committee.

Personally, I should like the tremendous powers of the press to be used to reveal the true voice of India, to urge and encourage our national efforts, to help in forging national unity and to achieve an identity of purpose with national policy. Thus, it could play a truly significant role in winning public co-operation and strengthening public participation in the great and challenging tasks which await us.

Streamlining of Information and Broadcasting Ministry*

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir. Shri Nath Pai has delivered a very eloquent and moving speech. If he will allow me to say so, it was not correct in all its aspects. Most of the questions he asked were answered to the best of our ability in the statement which I had placed on the Table of the House. As the hon. Member has himself pointed out, in that statement, I admitted that much could be done to improve AIR as well as other sections of the Ministry. But perfection is a state which few of us, if any at all, can hope to attain. I know that none of the sections of my Ministry will ever say that they are perfect; no matter what we do, how much we do, there is always room for more to be done and for greater perfection.

Having said that–Shri Nath Pai himself has read out from my statement—I do believe that there is room for improvement, and we are going into this matter very, very thoroughly, and that is why it has taken a little more time than we had anticipated. I shall first deal with some of the particular questions. The question of staff artistes has been mentioned. The number of staff artistes working there are 1,800 and not 13,000.

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More decisions are adopted by the Committee in which non-officials are included. There were various committees of enquiry. There was one departmental enquiry sometime ago, which made some recommendations, and many of those recommendations have already been implemented. It is also true that all staff artistes were not satisfied with the Committee or its recommendations, because they were not represented on the Committee itself although they were sent for and their viewpoint was taken. I have myself agreed to meet all those who are now dissatisfied and to see what complaints they have and as far as possible we shall try to meet those complaints.

With regard to the allegations which have been made regarding the way in which the funeral was dealt with, I am sure you will appreciate, I was not in a position to hear these programmes myself and, therefore, I cannot express my personal opinion. These matters are very much a question of one's personal taste. Views have been expressed even in this very short time both for and against the programme, as hon. Members have noticed. This is the state even in the public. There are a large number of people who appreciate the programme and there are people who do not like the way that it was done. But it was

* Replying (as the Minister of Information and Broadcasting) to the Half-an-Hour Discussion on the proposals for streamlining of the work of Information and Broadcasting Ministry, *L.S. Deb.*, 1 October, 1964, cc. 5014-22.

also, I think, Members should appreciate, in extremely difficult conditions that the AIR was functioning, because due to enormous crowds they were not able to get through everywhere they wanted to go, they were not able to get the people they wanted for commentary and there were many other difficulties in their way.

With regard to the President's programme, this was entirely up to the President when he will speak. As messages were received of the speech they were announced.

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I am glad Shri Nath Pai has his own spies there*. What information the Ministry got finally they had to relay; they were not listening round the corners....

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I had already admitted right at the beginning that we are not claiming to be perfect or that no mistakes were made. I said that right at the beginning and I had have said it several times publicly, privately and in every possible way.

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Some charges about nepotism and so on were made. I do not believe in this kind of general charge. If the hon. Member has any specific case in view, I think he should intimate it to me and I will certainly look into it.

As far as the Director General's right of appointing people is concerned, he can appoint people who have a fee up to Rs. 500 only.

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Committees have been appointed to assist him.**

Then, I am afraid, I do not have the exact amount of time that was devoted to Karnatic music. But we do have Karnatic music in regular broadcasts, in the National Programme and also in Vividh Bharati.

I am sorry, I have no information of what happened in the other House regarding spies from Pakistan, but I can assure the hon. Member that there is no Russian propaganda being carried on the AIR, or indeed propaganda for any other country.

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The most important question which Shri Nath Pai and some others have raised is with regard to the Committee of Enquiry which I have talked about myself. As I said, it is taking a little long time because we want to do a thorough job. We are in communication with experts who are advising us how to proceed with it. We hope that this matter will get under

* Replying to Shri Nath Pai's remark, "The President was ready with his speech at 3 O'clock".

** Replying to Shri Nath Pai's question, "Any Committee to assist him ?"

way very soon. I had hoped that such a committee could report in three months, but I am told that it would not be possible and the time that is suggested is six months. We have not yet finalized either the names or the terms of reference, but we do want this to be, as I have myself stated on the floor of the House, as thorough as possible and we want to work at two levels; that is, to tell us the things which we can do immediately while they are thinking of bigger changes which may take more time. With regard to the question whether there should be a corporation or not this is something which has got to be considered at the Cabinet level, although this Committee may give its views on this.

It depends upon what view the Committee takes.* I personally do not think that just having a corporation will necessarily improve anything, because it is a question of having the right person in the right place, and that will be just as well in the present circumstances as in a corporation.

We will make an attempt to do so.**

Having said all this, I must also put another fact before the Members, which is this, that all the departments of the Ministry are working under a very difficult circumstance, which is lack of resources, lack of finance. At every stage we are told to cut down at a time when I personally feel that the Ministry should expand. By expansion I do not mean the personnel necessarily.

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Most of the discontent of the staff artistes are about their emoluments. We cannot increase them until we have larger funds at our disposal. With regard to staff artistes, there are two kinds—regular artistes and artistes engaged on contracts. As far as regular staff are concerned, their emoluments and conditions of service were reviewed by the Second Pay Commission and they are governed by the same rules and procedures as are applicable to all other Government servants.

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Even the non-regular artistes have the usual benefits like medical aid, allotment of government residential accommodation, ordinary and maternity leave, travelling allowance and so on.

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They have no associations.***

If hon. Members want any other information, I could let them have it later on. I do not have the figures with me. But I want to assure them, as I have done barely a week ago,

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* Replying to Shri Hem Barua's question : "Have you suggested to the Cabinet the idea of a corporation."

** Replying to Shri Hem Barua's remark, "But you do not have the right people at the right places now."

*** Replying to Shri Hem Barua's remark, "But you do not allow them to engage in trade union activities."

that though we were thinking of forming this Committee, as I said, nothing has been finalized yet. But we are in touch with experts, and we certainly hope that this work will soon be under way.

But it is not fair to compare the A.I.R. with the B.B.C. The B.B.C. is not only a very big organisation with enormous funds at its disposal; it functions in a very small country. Here in India we are a vast country with many official languages—very many other languages which are not recognised, but which have to be recognised for our purposes.

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We have many programmes in tribal dialects and so on. Programmes have to be beamed at quite different levels. Shri Nath Pai found some of the programmes boring; but we have had reports from experts, not only Indian experts but people who come from U.N. and other places, that our radio forums are working exceedingly well, that the village people are taking great interest in them, and that there is a demand for more of them. And we are certainly trying to extend the service. There are already 8,555 of them, whereas in 1959 there were, I think, only about 400-385 or something like that.

And there are farmers forums and many other rural programmes. I think those are the most important programmes.

Another thing, a weakness which I have seen and which has been mentioned by the committee headed by Shri Vidyalankar, is the lack of coordination with some of the other Ministries. That is, that even those programmes which are effective are then blocked, because the information that the villager wants immediately afterwards is not available, whether on family planning or where to get better seed or something which has to be followed up in that particular district or in that particular region. We are also working on that, and we hope that all these deficiencies will be removed soon.

I only hope that the hon. Members will show a little patience and that they will not attribute personal motives to anybody in this thing. Very many suggestions are coming, and we are all trying to work together to do a better job. It does not help if all kinds of motives are attributed to the people who are working there. That is not conducive either to greater unity or better working.

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A Glance at the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting*

Shri Hem Barua, in opening this debate, compared the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to an empire. It is certainly true that through our mass media we are in constant touch with a very large number of people all over the country. The UNESCO Constitution says that wars begin in the minds of men, but so do all other ideas like love of country, the urge to work, the necessity for mutual understanding, the determination for unity. Therefore, the task before the Ministry is not only one of giving information to the public or putting specific problems before it, but also of creating a mental atmosphere. Here I must hasten to assure the hon. Members that we do not believe in having any kind of conformity, we believe in trying to encourage mature thought which can come only through flexibility of mind and awakening of curiosity.

A developing country, especially one of the size of India, faces enormous problems, difficulties and pressures, and therefore needs to have a new approach in its mass media. Family planning, the food problem, the need for greater production etc., must all be dealt with taking into account the mental blockages, superstitions and traditions of the people which exist in different parts of the country. To gain the trust of the people, we must keep in touch with the thoughts which stir them. The Ministry is there to project the policies of the Government and to elucidate them. But I am very conscious of the fact that the media units should not become mere purveyors of Government bulletins. They must face the challenge of becoming live and imaginative communication links between our far-flung and diverse people and to try to draw the people into the process of the growth of the country, to help to make them more constructive and more informed participants in nation-building activities. We must try and create intellectual cement which will hold the people together no matter what the crisis, no matter what the provocation.

The view that my Ministry has a role to play in the shaping of the national mind is one which has been voiced by many hon. Members, and by Shri Vidyalankar who has special knowledge of the Ministry because of the hard work put in by his committee and the very valuable suggestions made by it. Many of these suggestions have already been implemented, others are in the process of being implemented, and the few remaining ones are under consideration.

I shall now try to deal with some of the points raised in the debate, but in the short time at my disposal, it may not be possible to mention every item. However, I should like

* Replying to the debate (as the Minister of Information and Broadcasting) on the Demands for Grants, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, *L.S. Deb.*, 9 April, 1965, cc. 8715-26.

to assure the hon. Members that I have noted all the points, and shall look into them carefully, and also that we are always available for further suggestions.

The need for increased import of newsprint and for better conditions for staff artistes and others are matters about which we ourselves have been deeply anxious. Regarding newsprint, nobody would be happier than if it were possible to ensure satisfaction to all the demands for additional quotas. However, hon. Members are well aware of our foreign exchange difficulties, and also the fact that neither the allocation of foreign exchange nor the import of newsprint lies within the purview of this Ministry. The newspaper industry itself can help in easing the situation by voluntary co-operation in two directions.

Firstly, representative organisations of the industry can help to reduce, if not eliminate, misuse of newsprint. I do not know whether this is true or not, but Members themselves are aware that there is a wide belief, which has been expressed in this House and the other House also, in the existence of this malpractice. This kind of rumour going around vitiates the atmosphere.

Secondly, the industry can help by voluntary adoption of the price page schedule which was based on the formula submitted by the industry itself. Such co-operation would considerably strengthen the case of the press.

We are unhappy about the persistence of monopolies in the newspaper industry, and believe that this is harmful to the growth of a truly free and representative press. The Monopolies Commission is being asked to consider this matter and to advise us.

Newspapers have become a big industry requiring enormous financial outlay even at the initial stages. This raises difficulties for the small and the regional newspapers. However, regional backwardness is also responsible for hampering the growth of such papers. The Ministry is doing what it can to help, and we are awaiting the report of the Diwakar Committee in August for further guidance in this matter.

Regarding staff artistes, some steps have already been taken which should go a long way in alleviating their hardships. All new appointments after 1st October, 1964, are on a five-year basis; action is being taken to apply the same rule to those who were in service earlier. There are over 1,800 staff artistes, and it will take a little time to execute the new contracts formally. All the allowances admissible to Government servants are being paid to them.

The formation and recognition of the Staff Artistes Association was viewed sympathetically by my Ministry. However, according to a new order, we have to await the finalisation of rules by the Ministry of Home Affairs for the recognition of Service Associations. There are other associations such as the Class I Engineering Officers and the Association of Ministerial Staff of All India Radio which are in the same position. Many hon. Members pointed out, and we ourselves are fully aware of our dependence on the staff artistes, and we are grateful to them for the many years of loyal service which they have put in.

We are also considering proposals for improving the scales of pay of the monitoring service which some hon. Members mentioned. An hon. Member mentioned the discrepancy in the pay scales of Hindi and English typists and stenographers. I have found out on enquiry at the Ministry that there is no such discrimination.

Specific quotas for members of the Scheduled Castes in various categories of staff are prescribed by Government and these are reflected in the staffing pattern of AIR's regular services. Sometimes we are unable to find the right persons and in this case we keep the posts vacant.

There was some criticism of our Publications Division. On checking our Publications Division, we found that there was a physical verification in 1961 and again in 1963-64. The percentage of shortage comes to less than half per cent which is considered rather low since the publishers make an allowance up to five per cent shortage for an edition. We found on checking that the Publications Division is in an extremely cramped position. I would very much like to invite hon. Members to go and see this for themselves, and if possible, to help us to obtain greater accommodation.

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I am not justifying it.* I have already said that we have had a physical verification and that the shortage is less than half percent. But it is true that efficiency suffers in all directions when you are so cramped for space, both working space and storage space.

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...An hon. Member from the South mentioned that Tamil and Telugu programmes are being announced in Hindi. This is not quite correct. All programmes are announced in the regional language of the relevant broadcast. The only exception is Vividh Bharati, which is an All-India service and in which the items are very briefly introduced in simple Hindi. Shri Prakash Vir Shastri's concern for Hindi is genuine and valid. While he can urge us to move faster in having more Hindi programmes, I think it is unfair of him to accuse us of not implementing Government's policies in this regard. The Ministry is fortunate that besides other officials, it has a Secretary and a Joint Secretary who are both scholars and well-versed in Hindi and Sanskrit.

Yesterday, we had the amusing spectacle of Congress Members accusing All India Radio of giving more time to the Opposition and the Opposition saying that it is being ignored by All India Radio. I think this in itself goes to prove that we are taking a balanced view.

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The House will probably remember that in 1957, the AIR had offered the leaders of the Opposition parties to broadcast before the elections, and this offer was rejected by them. However, soon after my assuming charge of this Ministry, I issued orders that we should

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* Replying to Shri Hem Barua's remark, "That is no justification."

have debates and discussions on both controversial and other matters by people of differing viewpoints. I believe some such programmes have already taken place and others are being planned. Instructions were also issued—I am mentioning this because this point was also raised by hon. Members—that we should not publicise individual Ministers unless their statements were of national importance of real news value.

There has been criticism both of the inadequacy of our internal stations and the weakness of our external services. In both these respects, the Ministry has perhaps not done as much as it should have or as much as we would like to do. But it is doing its best now to strengthen our internal and external programmes both by improving the programmes and by installing new stations and additional auxiliary centres as well as low-power medium-wave transmitters which will cover a number of cities all over the country. Some hon. Members mentioned Calicut and also Kutch. Calicut was already commissioned some time ago and should be put in soon. Kutch is included in the new programme. I am sure that hon. Members who have asked for other towns will realise that first importance must be given to the border areas.

One hon. Member called the International Film Festival a fiasco and wondered why this was not cancelled as was the Music Festival. The reason is quite simple. The invitations were issued before I became Minister, and as this was an international event it was not possible to withdraw it. It is true that in the film festival there was some confusion. This was due partly to certain genuine mistakes on our part and partly to causes beyond our control. However, whatever else this film festival could be called, it can certainly not be called a fiasco. I do not have the time to go into the details here but the House will be interested to know that the Britisher who spoke here was not trying to be sarcastic. I have met him since and he has spoken to film audiences in England. Similar praise has been given by other distinguished people from the film world who have long experience of international film events. Not only have these people written to us, to the Ministry, and to me personally, but they have printed their comments in journals in their own countries. The latest one that I saw just a few days ago was a cutting from a Japanese periodical, recommending this type of festival to its own film industry.

Shri Karan Singhji mentioned films on family planning. We have made eight films and one of these—it was a colour cartoon—was adjudged the best documentary in the Commonwealth Awards, 1964, recently held by the Royal Society of Arts, in London. Six more short films are under production. Those interested in the Films Division will be glad to know that we are trying to revitalise the whole division and are expecting an expert from UNESCO to help us in this.

Shrimati Yashoda Reddy's praise was rather embarrassing.

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With regard to her suggestions that some films should be shown free to children, I must tell her that the showing of feature films in the States comes within the purview of the State Governments and we have no say in this matter. I would like to assure the House that we are taking considerable measures to revitalise the whole Ministry and all our media

units. I would like to tell them now something about our future programmes. For strengthening the external services, two high-power shortwave transmitters will be in service in Delhi early next year, and one, 1,000 kw medium-wave transmitter will be provided for night-time coverage to countries in North and South-East Asia.

Here again, I think it was Shri Hem Barua who said that it is like a case where one who was going to marry a girl of 16, was offered two girls of eight years each or some such thing.

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I would like to assure him that this suggestion that we shall have two transmitters of 500 kw each was given by our own technical men because they thought that they would not only be equally powerful and effective as the other, but, at the same time, since the parts would be interchangeable, if one went out of order, the other one could be kept going, and so, it would be easier.

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We left this to the experts and their advice was that we should ask for two 500 KW transmitters.* Those was have offered us the transmitters are willing to give us one or the other. They are not making any demands about this.

We have decided to set up a Directorate of Farm and Home Broadcasting and a Directorate of Listener Research. Additional foreign exchange will be released, I may assure the House, for the manufacture of a large number of low-cost transistor sets. The possibility of charging a lower licence fee of Rs. 5 on low-cost radio and transistor sets is being investigated by the Finance Ministry. 35 per cent of new radio sets are now being manufactured by cottage industry here. The third plan target of 0.8 million sets is likely to be reached before long.

With regard to the News Section, we have decided to set up six new regional News units. Our endeavour is to build up a news unit at each radio station. Bureaux of Information are being set up—one in the west for Himachal Pradesh and Punjab and one in the East for Assam, NEFA and Nagaland Border publicity is being strengthened by additional mobile field publicity and increased activity, including 7 training centres of our song and drama unit. Community Radio schemes should be extended to cities and bigger towns, especially to cover the poorer localities. In Delhi, we have found that the wire broadcasting service has been useful for the lower middle-class sector.

It is only through radio that people living in isolated areas can come directly into contact with the more dynamic minds of the country and it is this idea which is prompting our interest in television also, that is, to make available the best teaching, especially in

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* Replying to the argument made by Shri Hem Barua that when we wanted a 1000 KW mediumwave transmitter, two 500 KW transmitters could not serve our original purpose of counteracting the Chinese propaganda in the regions where our voices were not heard.

those subjects which may require expensive equipment, to municipal and other average schools.

As I said earlier, we hope to extend it also to farm programmes and family planning programmes.

We should very much like to have the active participation of young people in our work and are planning special youth programmes to introduce young scientists, artists, writers, farmers and as Shrimati Ramdulari Sinha suggested, trade union workers. We believe that artists should be drawn from as wide a sector as possible, and that utmost encouragement should be given for free discussion. A more meaningful democracy can be built up through broadcast discussions on local issues by village leaders. Progressive farmers and other local personalities from throughout the district could provide effective stimulus to agricultural improvement. We are also exploring the possibility of a national system of district broadcasting.

Hon. Members are aware that we have decided to expand the Delhi television to provide a daily service for about two hours. This is in addition to the services which are now in operation. For this, we have accepted the West German Government's offer to set up a complete television studio and to give training facilities. The West German Government will also supply the necessary technicians until our own people are fully trained. There is a proposal now under consideration to set up four other centres—Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and one other city which will perhaps be Kanpur.

We propose to reorganise and rationalise the pay scales and service conditions of the Central Information Service. It has been decided to upgrade certain senior posts to attract better and more efficient people. Hon. Members also evinced considerable interest in training facilities. They will be glad to know that by August 1965, we propose to start the work of the National Institute of Mass Communication with 70 trainees—one each from the States and Union territories and the rest from the Central Information Service. This Institute will ultimately find a place in the campus of the proposed Nehru University.

It is unfortunately true that for many reasons—the rigidity of government rules and regulations and the higher pay given by private agencies—the government is not often able to attract or to keep the best talent. Our task is to attempt to bring this talent into play and to help it to enrich our media of communication.

As government servants, our staff get more security than they would in private employment, but at the same time they are also exposed to far greater scrutiny and criticism.

Distinguished and knowledgeable foreign visitors have been amazed at the quality and the amount of work achieved within our extremely limited resources of trained personnel, of equipment, of funds and accommodation.

To the hon. Members of this House, I am especially grateful for the interest which they have always taken and the guidance they have always given to the different departments of my Ministry. But I should like to take this occasion to make a plea to them.

In India, we expect too much too soon from any project. Criticism begins almost before the project is under way. If we are to get out of our grooves, and yesterday's debate showed that this is what most hon. Members would like us to do, if we are to give our young people the chance to think original thoughts or to evolve new techniques, we must be prepared for them also to make honest mistakes and to show a certain amount of sympathy to them. Too often do we seize upon an error with such alacrity that initiative and talent are frightened out of existence. The progress of this country has been no mean achievement by any standards. This we could attain because we stood determinedly by our declared policy of socialist development at home and non-alignment abroad, in spite of persistent attempts by our opponents, ever since independence, to side-track us from our goals and to involve us with power groups inside or outside the country. While the Government has chartered the course, it is for the people themselves at their posts, officials and non-officials, peasants and workers, all citizens who have supported the Government and who have struggled, in the face of endless difficulties, to advance step by step.

It is true that Government's policies and actions and their projections give direction and create an image, of the country, but I should like to remind hon. Members that their utterances and their criticism also influence the thinking of our people and are apt to be quoted against our own country abroad. Let us, therefore, be careful that for the sake of scoring points or gaining some other advantage, we do not tarnish the image of India for our own people or for people abroad. I believe that if we can keep faith in the Indian people, if we can give them faith in themselves, we shall strengthen the country and renew our sense of national pride.

Press Council Bill*

Mr. Vice-Chairman, I want to make it clear that I am not replying to the debate. Since the hon. Deputy Minister is in charge of the Press in my Ministry, he will do so whatever he gets the chance, and I have no doubt that he will deal with all the amendments that have been tabled. However, I have got up now to direct the attention of the House to certain broad principles and objectives of this Bill, for unless we keep these in mind we may lose ourselves in a mass of details—as we have lost ourselves for a considerable time—which are of lesser significance.

First of all, let us remember that by sponsoring this Bill, the Government of India is breaking fresh ground in a new field and in a manner which has not been done so far anywhere else in the world. Both in Parliament and outside, this matter has been viewed from two differing points of view. On one side, it is strongly felt that the Press Council should be essentially a measure of self-regulation not only for the profession of journalism but also on the part of the newspaper industry. Considering the structure and the aims of our Indian democracy, and the character and composition of the Indian Press, hon. Members will agree that it is by no means easy to reconcile the interests and functions of the industry and the profession with our national objectives. On the other hand is the view that the Press Council should be constituted and used as an instrument for curing the industry as well as the profession of all inadequacies and weaknesses. In this context, it is expected that the Press Council should directly carry out many positive measures of reform, of improvement of and assistance to the industry and working journalists. There was even an amendment before the Joint Select Committee suggesting that the Press Council might deal with the question of newsprint. Now it is obvious that the Press Council cannot be expected to take up and deal efficiently with such a wide range of administrative and executive duties. The measure before the House has inevitably to have a limited purpose. The Bill is thus a compromise, a practical compromise, between the idea of self-regulation by the profession and the industry and a desirable minimum element of regulation by way of assistance of a statutory character without which the self-regulation may not be effective, as the Deputy Minister and others have pointed out by citing the Gunn case in England. Had the industry and the profession been able to exercise the necessary self-regulation, there would have been no need to bring in this Bill before Parliament.

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* Participating (as the Minister of Information and Broadcasting) in the debate on the Motion for the consideration of the Press Council Bill, 1963, *R.S. Deb.*, 24 August, 1965, cc. 1160-64.

I am glad to find that, on the whole, there is a large measure of agreement expressed by all sections of the House. Many hon. Members have tabled amendments and we shall certainly look at them very carefully. Two similar bodies which have been mentioned here time and again are the Medical Council and the Bar Council. I am neither a lawyer nor a medical person but I have heard it said that the task of the lawyer is to get his client acquitted and to find loop-holes in the case against him, irrespective of whether the man is guilty or not, whether he had committed the crime or not. Similarly a medical man, it is said, may pronounce an operation to be successful even if the patient dies afterwards. Now, being a lay person, I see things from a slightly different angle. I must confess that while fully believing in the freedom of the Press, I do also believe in the freedom of the individual, provided, of course, that he or she does not commit any anti-social or anti-national act.

While the general level of our newspapers is quite high, we all know that there are exceptions, that there have been and still are cases where innocent persons are harmed, where passions are inflamed and a tense atmosphere aggrevated to the detriment of public interest. I should like to quote from a famous case which has been quoted in the Report of the Press Commission :

"In Gitlow *v.* New York, 1925 S.C. 13, the Supreme Court had to pronounce—

> It is a fundamental principle long established that the freedom of speech and of the Press which is secured by the Constitution does not confer an absolute right to speak or publish without responsibility whatever one may choose, or an unrestricted and unbridled licence that gives immunity for every possible use of language, prevents the punishment of those who abuse this freedom.

This has happened in our country time and again and that is the reason why the Government was so anxious to bring forward this Bill to the House and to have the proposed Press Council. Mr. Bhupesh Gupta has asked me to do many things which I think are beyond my power but not beyond the powers of the Press Council and the very reason for proposing that Council is that it would tackle some of the problems concerning the Press which are before the country. The Press suffers from many ills and monopoly ownership is certainly one of them and that is why if Mr. Bhupesh Gupta studies the Bill, he will see that this is one of the items brought within the purview of the Press Council. Mr. Gupta has been objecting to our helping big papers. Now, we have certain rules and regulations and we try to follow them to the best of our ability. Advertisements to the papers are given according to the circulation of the newspapers. Now, it does happen that the bigger newspapers have a bigger circulation and from that point of view they get more advertisements but may I point out, Sir, that Mr. Bhupesh Gupta himself is guilty of giving more publicity to the "Ananda Bazar Patrika" than I could ever do. I have hardly seen a day pass by when the name of this newspaper and its editor or the editor's father has not been mentioned.

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Both big newspapers, I do agree with some of the points made by Mr. Bhupesh Gupta*. One of them is regarding the basic purpose, namely, that our newspapers should put important issues before the public and try to explain all aspects of the problem, so that people get a fuller view—both sides of the question of what is happening. However, this cannot be forced upon newspapers; it can come only by public demand and I hope Mr. Bhupesh Gupta will create this demand in the people, not by decrying other people but by trying to build up good news editors and others concerned.

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As I said, I do not wish to go into the amendments as the Deputy Minister will deal with them at the end of the debate. The purpose of my getting up was merely to suggest that we should not forget the basic fact of the situation in India today and the necessity for agreement on the broad policy of the Bill which is essentially to meet that situation and at the same time to maintain the unique measure of freedom which the Press enjoys in our country. I feel that some of the amendments, if accepted, would prove restrictive of this freedom and I am afraid that if the Press Council were to be charged with tasks far beyond its competence and its natural functioning, we would be defeating the very purpose of the measure before us. It is certainly not our claim that this is a perfect measure. In the present context and at this stage of the legislation, it would be difficult to seek perfection. I would merely suggest to the House to allow the Press Council to be constituted and to let it function for sometime within the framework of the Bill as amended by us. There will be enough time to consider, in the light of future experience, how best to remove any inadequacy that may be felt in the course of its working. Thank you.

* Responding to Shri A.D. Mani's remark, "The 'Amrit Bazar Patrika' also, both."

Newsprint Policy*

Madam Deputy Chairman, I wish to express my thanks for the appreciation which the hon. Members have shown for this report. I am fully aware that the report is not perfect and that we have still to improve in many directions and specially in the two matters that seem to be of the deepest concern to the Members : one is control of concentration of ownership and the second is with regard to the amount of newsprint available.

If we take the term "monopolies" in its legal sense, we are told that monopolies do not exist in the newspaper industry. But I fully realise that we have to look at this matter from a much wider point of view. In fact I should like to quote Mr. Felix Frankfurter, a Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States—which is quoted in the Press Commission Report—when he remarks, "the fact that the shrinkage in the number of newspaper owners is not the product of evil design but largely attributable to economic and technological influences does not lessen the implications of the trend." "Concentration of press ownership", he says, "is a world-wide trend, which attests the complexity of the problem and the obduracy of its solution". This matter was referred to the Monopolies Commission but they have refused to deal with it saying that it does not come within their purview. Now within the restrictions of the Constitution we are trying to do whatever we can and, as had been stated on the floor of the House on an earlier occasion, we hope that the proposed Press Council will be able to deal with this matter more successfully than we have been able to do.

Many questions have been raised by hon. Members. One was about the allotment of newsprint to some of these bigger newspapers. We have with considerable difficulty been trying at least to see that they do not expand any further. It would of course have been better if we had curbed them more, but I think this by itself is a step in the right direction. For instance, I am told that the Chittor Edition of the "Indian Express" was transferred partly to Madras and partly to Bangalore. We did not give any additional quota of newsprint for either of these editions.

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So it seems.** We have no power to stop a person changing his place of business.

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* Participating (as the Minister of Information and Broadcasting) in the discussion on the Motion regarding the Report of the Registrar of Newspapers for India, *R.S. Deb.*, 17 November, 1965, cc. 1736-47.

** Answering the Deputy Chairman's query, "Can they do so"?

They are obviously playing with newsprint.* About the same newspaper I am told that they failed to bring out eight more dailies in 1962 owing to our refusal to sanction extra newsprint.

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Let us hope that the Press Council will be able to go into these matters in greater detail.**

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We do not prosecute any paper for failure to supply copies to us, as one Member, Shri Arjun Arora, I think, mentioned. But we do not made a reduction in the entitlement of newsprint if the paper fails to satisfy us with the information that is wanted in regard to its regularity of publication. Prosecution takes place only if the paper fails to supply the annual statement in regard to ownership, circulation, etc. This is a statutory obligation under the PRB Act. Even here, the papers are dealt with very leniently and after a show-cause notice is given.

Another Member—I think Shri Bhargava, but I am not sure—made a point about Government journals being printed on newsprint. Now, it is only one journal in 15 languages—which is a journal of the All India Radio; 'Akash Vani' it is called—which is printed in newsprint. All the rest of our publications are on white paper. Even in regard to these journals, we have now been told that newsprint will not be available, which will, of course, make it more expensive for their publication.

Now, the other points made are mainly about the small newspaper. This matter has been under consideration for a fairly long time and the Ministry is deeply concerned and wishes to do whatever it can to encourage the smaller newspapers, realising that these are the newspapers which will serve the common people and which should ultimately have the largest circulation. It is true that their circulation is not large at present and certainly we want to help any way we can. The House is aware that a Committee was formed of which Shri Mani is a distinguished member, and their Report has come in. But it is still being considered. And we shall certainly look into it in great detail and see what could be done because we realise that the small newspaper is not merely an industry, but it is essential to the effective functioning of our democracy. We also feel that it will help to encourage opinions and it can play a very useful part in forming public opinion in the rural areas especially, to which all of you have given so much importance.

I would like just to say a few words about newsprint. I know that there is great criticism about newsprint but due to the foreign exchange shortage, I am afraid, we can not do very much about this except to try to cut out and have as fair a distribution as possible in the

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* Replying to Shri Arjun Arora's observation, "You could check the bifurcation, one paper becoming two papers by shifting to two places", and also Shri Gurudev Gupta's observation ".....That shows that they have not only transferred the quota of their edition to the other edition but they have pooled from other sources....."

** Responding to Shri Gurudev Gupta's remarks, "Their attitude seems to be, let the Government of India do what they like. That is an open challenge."

circumstances. The import has to be kept strictly within the ceiling sanctioned every year and this year particularly the situation is very grave indeed. Newspaper with an annual entitlement of 40 metric tonnes or less are exempted from the payment of licence fee, production of income-tax verification number. Those with a circulation of less than 2,000 copies are also exempted from the production of Chartered Accountant's Certificate in regard to their circulation. We were given a ceiling for the import of 99,450 metric tonnes of newsprint which is 2,000 metric tonnes more than the last year. Out of this, 41,000 metric tonnes are to come from the rupee area the balance from Canada, Finland and the Scandinavian countries. About 15,000 metric tonnes are expected from the NEPA Mills. The Ministry of Industry has made available to us 31,000 metric tonnes including 5,000 metric tonnes specially sanctioned to meet the increased demand of newspapers during the time of Pakistani aggression and I am glad to mention—and the House will appreciate—the very good work which the newspapers did during this period.

Shri Gujral pointed out that at least nine of the newspapers had lost newsprint which has been ordered from various parts of the world and which has been kept back by Pakistan. Now, this seizure of newsprint is going to cause considerable difficulty to the newspapers. And towards the beginning of the next financial year, I am afraid that unless steps are taken for the conservation of newsprint to the greatest extent possible, the situation will be an extremely difficult one. This indicates the need for some immediate voluntary cuts in the consumption by newspapers and periodicals. As the Minister mentioned at the time of the Press Council Bill, many of these things cannot be imposed by Government; it is a question of the Press people themselves getting together and seeing what is in their own larger interests and in the interests of the country. We are allotting additional quantities of white printing paper to fill in the gap. But, as you all know, this is very much more expensive than newsprint and therefore we try to give more newsprint to the smaller newspapers and allot the white printing paper to the larger newspapers.

Some complaints have been made about the allotment of white printing paper and also about the delay or rather the complete absence of replies. I am sorry, but the person concerned in our Ministry says that applications for quota are often incomplete and unaccompanied by the necessary documents. This contributes to the delay in sanctioning the quotas. So, I hope, if you know of any cases where a reply has not gone, you would check up; and we will also look into them and see what can be done.

With regard to the probe, as hon. Members have pointed out, this is again a difficult problem because of the lack of information which is willingly given. It is quite true, as Shri Bhargava said, that having only two teams is a disadvantage, and we should certainly do whatever we can to try and increase this number. And as the Deputy Minister points out to me during the recent circulation probe we have been able to save Rs. 12 lakh in foreign exchange by cutting down the quota of newsprint given to certain newspapers. But there is a need for further tightening up of this work and procedure.

Much was said as to whether the word 'monopoly' should be used or the word 'concentration' should be used. This morning a friend who belongs to the newspaper world

has suggested a new word—I am not quite sure whether it exists in the dictionary—it is 'oligopoly' which means a few people or a group having the same interests....

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It does not matter;* by whatever name you call it, we should not have that disease.

Some hon. Members made points about advertisements and so on. This does not really come within the purview of the Registrar of Newspapers, it is quite another Department of the Ministry.

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Also, we have really nothing to do with the DIR, which hon. Members appreciate. While I am fully in favour of granting freedom of expression, I think that everybody should appreciate that in times of war or national emergency; one should not try to create a point of view which might create confusion in the public mind or which would weaken the unity of the people about which the hon. Member was speaking, I am told that certain newspapers adopted a line which created disturbance in the public. I know that I myself have received many letters from the South complaining about some of the view points expressed in these newspapers.

One very good point made by Mr. Thengari is about the encouragement of co-operatives and trusts of newspapers. Members will perhaps remember that this form of ownership was suggested by the Press Commission also, and certainly the Ministry will encourage this. I think this is the best way of avoiding concentration because it is extremely difficult in the present circumstances for an individual to bring out a successful paper because such large funds are required. The same applies to party newspapers.

Somebody made a comment about the large number of Congress Party newspapers. They mostly suffer from lack of funds and lack of organisation which today the newspaper industry seems to find necessary.

The percentage of the form of ownership by individuals is 57.3 and of societies and associations 20.2.

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There are certain rules with regard to advertisements and the Government have been following those rules**. It may be that those rules are not satisfactory and we need to go into them again. I mentioned earlier that the Diwakar Enquiry Committee went into the question of small newspapers. A report has come. But we have not yet had time to fully study it. It is under consideration of the Government. As soon as we go into it, I think we will have better answers to some of these questions that have been asked with regard to small newspapers. It would not be fair on my part to mention it now.

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* Responding to Shri A.D. Mani's remark, "Heavy concentration is better."

** Shri M.M. Dharia wanted to know the views of the Minister regarding Government advertisements which could be given to small newspapers.

With regard to the quota of the Indian Express group, it is roughly between 800 and 1,000 tonnes. But the matter is still *sub judice*.

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Unfortunately, the white printing paper is also not available in unlimited quantities.* As far as any kind of paper is concerned, we are in a difficult situation.

With regard to the price-page schedule I have expressed my views on the floor of this House on an earlier occasion.

As you know, this was struck down by the Supreme Court, I believe, the Diwakar Committee has suggested this again. I would make a suggestion. It was struck down on the ground that it was introduced by the Government. But if it is taken up as a voluntary measure or on the advice of the Press Council, perhaps it would be possible for this to go thorough. But many of the bigger newspapers are very much against it as I am sure Mr. Mani is aware.

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Actually the newspapers have themselves supported the move during the last war. But for some reason afterwards they went back on this. However, as I said, I hope these matters can be taken up by the Press Council when it is formed.

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The difficulty is the question of fundamental rights.** As I said earlier, it was the Supreme Court which struck down this introduction of the price-page schedule by the Government. Now in these changed circumstances, we can perhaps approach all the newspapers and try to persuade them. But as we have seen in many other directions, persuasion has not got us far. In this matter I think it is best to leave it to the Press Council and if they can get something done, probably it can come again in some form to the House. (*Interruptions*)

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Madam Deputy Chairman, I have really met all the points which hon. Members have raised except one point which, again, was a little irrelevant to the issue here. It was about my remarks regarding foreign correspondents. As usual, I was not quoted quite correctly in the newspapers. I did not absolve every foreign correspondent from this. But I did say that it was not fair to blame every one either. Some have tried to send objective reports, some have not. Also it was a question of taking action against them. I said that this matter

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* Replying to Shri Gurudev Gupta who wanted to know the opinion of the Minister on the proposal that the big papers whose circulation was so to say, above 50,000 copies and whose annual profits ran into lakhs be asked to use cent per cent white printing paper instead of newsprint in order to save foreign exchange.

** Replying to Shri Gurudev Gupta who wanted to know why the newspaper owners were not ready to cooperate with the Government in accepting the price-page schedule : and what was the difficulty in bringing forward a Bill.

had to be watched and considered now from the long-term interest of the country. Does it help us to throw somebody out ? Will that give us better propaganda coverage in his country, or will it not ? We have to look at it from a much wider point of view. This was the remark which I had made. Naturally individual cases are taken up and if somebody's behaviour is considered objectionable enough for him to be sent out of the country or penalised in any other manner, certainly that matter should be looked into.

I think I have made most of the points made by hon. Members, I can see somebody getting very impatient also. So I will close now. I once again thank Members for the interest which they have taken in this matter and indeed in matters concerned with the Ministry. I want also to assure them that the suggestions which they have given or are likely to give in the future will always be welcomed and given the coolest consideration.

Thank you.

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PERSONALITIES

Felicitations to Shri N. Sanjiva Reddy*

Sir, we are the proud members of one of the leading Parliaments of the world. The Speaker is the custodian of the dignity and power of this august House. Not only does the Speaker regulate the business of this Lok Sabha but he must safeguard the rights of each individual Member since the Member themselves derive their mandate from the people through free and open elections, the Speaker is in effect the conscience of the electorate. That is why he ranks with the Chief Justice in the dignity accorded to him in our country.

The Speaker must at all time be alert and sensitive to the rights of M.Ps. All matters which are of national interest, or are deemed to be so, must naturally be allowed. But I am sure that the Speaker will use his firm and fair control to keep up the dignity and decorum of the House....

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Naturally,** Sir according to the rules and regulations, provided under our Constitution at the same time, I think it is necessary to persuade hon. Members from all sides of the House to avoid passion and prejudice. We, the Members of this House on our part, must help you, Sir, by exercising on ourselves restraint and responsibility.

Sir, you have been closely connected with our party but the party fully appreciates the role of the Speaker and realises that the Speaker must not be a political person...

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....and that he must sever his political connections. Contest for the Speakership is not unusual or abnormal, but once chosen, the Speaker belongs to all sections of the House. His office makes him so. He must naturally win the confidence all parties and Members by his impartiality, and fairness in his decisions and rulings. An equal responsibility devolves on the rest of us to help in defending the rights of the chair and in upholding the highest standards of conduct in this House.

On behalf of this House, may I felicitate you, Sir, and offer you our full support in the discharge of the onerous duties and burdens which you have taken upon yourself?

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* Felicitating Shri N. Sanjiva Reddy on his election to the Office of Speaker, Lok Sabha, *L.S. Deb.*, 17 March, 1967, cc. 54-55.

** Responding to Dr. Rammanohar Lohia's remark, "You always talk high but have you ever thought of justice?"

Felicitations to Shri V.V. Giri*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, may I, on behalf of all of us extend a hearty welcome to you? In your case, Sir, it is really a question of welcoming you back to the precincts of Parliament. You are not stranger to this building, having had a long and distinguished career, a Parliamentary career, yourself. With your rich and varied background as one of our leading freedom fighters, a veteran labour leader, a Minister, a Governor and an elder statesman in the post Independence years, you will no doubt bring to bear on your high and exalted office the valuable experience of a long and dedicated political career. We look forward to your wise guidance in the conduct of the deliberations of this House.

I should like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the government, to assure you, Sir, that you will at all times have our fullest support and co-operation in your task and of upholding the dignity of this august House, its privileges and the privileges of each of the hon. Members here.

Once again, I welcome you most heartily.

* Felicitating Shri V.V. Giri on his election as Chairman, Rajya Sabha, *R.S. Deb.*, 22 May, 1967. cc. 107-08.

Felicitations to Shri G.S. Dhillon*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, May I welcome you to your august office not only on my own behalf and on behalf of the Government and the Party, but also, if I may, on behalf of all sections of this House.

Sir, it is a happy augury that your election to this high office should have been unanimous, and thus met with the approval of all sections of this House. I say so because the Speaker, at least from the moment of his election, belongs to the entire House and sits above all Parties and above all differences.

To this distinguished Chair you bring long years of valuable experience as Presiding Officer. But you also bring to it the rich past of a varied public life as a political worker, as a social worker, as a journalist and, last but not least, as a keen sportsman. I hope that under your stewardship the House will imbibe the spirit which is normally expected in the sphere of sports that is, regard for the rules of the game, the conduct of every debate and every contest in a friendly and sportsmanlike spirit and, at all times and under all circumstances, unquestioned acceptance of any ruling or decision that you might be pleased to give from the Chair as the umpire.

Sir , the House of Parliament are indeed meant for free and even for fierce debate on every important issue facing the country. And occasionally, a touch of heat and passion will inevitably be injected into such debate. But I am sure my colleagues on all sides of the House will agree that there is need for us to join hands and make a determined and collective effort to preserve and foster the decorum and dignity of this house. The primary burden of this will devolve on you, Sir; but let us all on this occasion pledge to be solidly behind you in this task.

I have no doubt that the rights of all sides of the House and every hon. Member will be secure in your hands.

I extend our hearty felicitations to you and also our assurance that you shall at all times have our fullest co-operation in the discharge of the difficult duties upon which you are about to embark.

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* Felicitating Shri G.S. Dhillon on his election to the Office of Speaker, Lok Sabha, *L.S. Deb.*, 8 August, 1969, cc, 210-11.

*It is a privilege, as Leader of the House, to offer felicitations to the Speaker, Shri Dhillon.

I am sure that every fellow-Member of the new Lok Sabha, irrespective of party affiliation, will join me in assuring Shri Dhillon of the fullest co-operation in maintaining the honour and high traditions of the House.

In electing Shri Dhillon, we are not merely following the convention that the Speaker should be re-elected. We are expressing our regard for a person of great conscientiousness and courtesy.

The last two years in the House could hardly be called placid. There were storms, big and small, difficult constitutional issues, battles of procedure, some points of order threatening disorder. Shri Dhillon steered the House ably through all these troubles, always upholding the basic principles of parliamentary conduct, never losing the affability and candour, which are characteristic of him.

Students of constitutional history are aware that in the long conflict between Parliament and monarch, the Speaker was the spokesman of the citizenry. When the supremacy of Parliament was established, he became the symbol and respository of self-restraint, which is the basis of self-government. So, when we obey the Speaker, we are obeying a part of our own conscience.

In our own national life, the Speaker has been accorded an eminent position. By his temperament and personal qualities, Shri Dhillon is worthy of his office.

Mr. Speaker, I offer you greetings and good wishes. We know that your Chair is not one of roses. It will be the endeavour of this House not to make it one of thorns.

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* Felicitating Shri G.S. Dhillon on his re-election to the Office of Speaker, Lok Sabha, *L.S. Deb.*, 22 March, 1971, cc. 4-5.

Felicitations to Prof. G.G. Swell*

May I, on behalf of this august House and on my personal behalf, offer our sincere congratulations to Prof. Swell on his election to the office of Deputy Speaker, which is next in importance, in this House, only to your own high office.

Prof. Swell is not a stranger to us or to this House. He has been a distinguished Member since 1962 and many hon. Members will agree that he is amongst those effective Parliamentarians who made their mark almost from the beginning of their association with Parliament.

Prof. Swell is also amongst those for whom politics has not been the only field of interest, certainly not an obsession. His reputation as a professor and a man of letters is well known.

If I may say so Sir, in spite of his relatively youthful 45 years he carries a wise head on his shoulders. We value his gentleness, sobriety and the larger vision which he brings to bear on his observations here in this House. We are confident that Prof. Swell will bring dignity to the Chair which he will occupy and that he will conduct the not so easy proceedings of this House with fairness and absolute impartiality as well as the requisite degree of firmness.

We have elected Prof. Swell as an able Indian, but we do take special satisfaction from the fortunate circumstance that he is also an illustrious member of the tribal communities which are important and valuable constituents of the great Indian people.

We should like to congratulate him again, and to extend to him an assurance of our full co-operation and also our best wishes for success in the arduous duties upon which he is about to embark.

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**Mr. Speaker, may I in a very few words offer our hearty congratulations to Professor Swell on his re-election as Deputy Speaker. We are specially glad that we find him restored to full health after a long illness and able to take up his normal schedule of work which ,

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* Congratulating Prof. G.G. Swell on his election to the Office of Deputy Speaker, Lok Sabha, *L.S.Deb*, 9 December, 1969, cc. 212-13.

** Congratulating Pof. G.G. Swell on his re-election to the Office of Deputy Speaker, Lok Sabha, *L.S. Deb.*, 27 March, 1971, c.4.

as you all know, is by no means a light load. A fine parliamentarian himself, he has made a mark as Deputy–Speaker in a comparatively short time through his earnestness, devotion and deep concern for upholding the privileges and responsibilities of individual members. as well as of the House as a whole. He has proved to be a fine guardian of the parliamentary process and has been able to inspire wide-spread feeling of friendship and respect in the House. I assure him of the fullest co-operation from all Members of this House.

Felicitations to Dr. G.S. Dhillon and Shri S. L. Shakdher*

Sir, before you proceed with the business of the House, I have another pleasant task to perform–one which has been entrusted to me by the entire House, all parties. It is to warmly congratulate our Speaker, Dr. Dhillon on his election as President of the World Inter–Parliamentary Union. The Inter–Parliamentary Union is an International Partiamentary Organisation whose aim is to promote personal contacts between Members of all Parliaments and to unite them in common action to secure and maintain the full participation of their respective countries in the firm establishment and development of representative institutions and in the advancement of the work of international peace and cooperation. The honour is a richly deserved one. It is in recognition of Dr. Dhillon's personal qualities and of his hard and conscientious work for the Council. Dr. Dhillon has guided the deliberations of this House with dignity and good honour. We are conscious of the honour to our country and to this Parliament.

I should also like to take this opportunity to warmly congratulate Shri. S.L. Shakdher on his unanimous election as President of the Association of Secretaries– General of the Parliaments of the world for a three–year term. The objective of the Association is to carry out studies concerning parliamentary law, practice and procedure and to propose measures for improving the methods of work of the various Parliaments of the world and for ensuring collaboration between their services. Shri Shakdher's election is a tribute to India and to the work which he has been doing for the Association over the last two decades. All of us here are aware of his knowledge and his deep interest in parliamentary procedures, on which he is a recognised authority.

* Congratulating Dr. G.S. Dhillon, Speaker, Lok Sabha on his election as the President of the I.P.U., and Shri S.L. Shakdher, Secretary, Lok Sabha on his election as President of the A.S.G.P., *L.S. Deb.*, 12 November, 1973, cc. 15–16.

Felicitations to Shri B.R. Bhagat*

As the Leader of the House, I warmly congratulate Shri B.R. Bhagat on his elevation to this high office.

Shri Bhagat has spent most of his adult life in the service of the people. He has distinguished himself as a parliamentarian and as a Minister who has held charge of a large range of Departments. He has earned respect for his straight forwardness, his capacity, his grasp of principles and details. His amiability and tact have won, a wide circle of friends. His talents have been in evidence in international forums also.

The Lok Sabha is twenty-five years old. But it is only after the first General Elections under the Constitution that it became the repository of the expressed democratic will of our people. The Lok Sabha inherits the legacy of the Central Legislative Assembly and the Provisional Parliament both of which counted amongst its Members some of the most eminent personages in our recent history.

The Speaker is the custodian of these noble traditions. His foremost task is to uphold the dignity of the House and in doing so, defend the Independence, and inviolable unity of the nation itself. It is an axiom to say that the Speaker should be fair and impartial to all sections of the House. Is it not also necessary that all sections of the House should help him to be so ?

Parliament's supremacy is the reflection of the people's sovereignty. This sovereignty is not an abstract concept. As a living institution, Parliament should mirror the evolving aspirations of the people and find solutions to various old and newly emerging problems. It has been our constant endeavour to preserve Parliament's authority and to enlarge its capacity to deal with problems.

I am constrained to say that some sections of the House have abused the protection offered by legislative privileges and, as a result, have weakened Parliament. Strength grows through self-restraint. Men and institution decay if they neglect their responsibilities and think only of rights. This morning, one of our MPs showed me a quotation from Gandhiji who said to Mr. H.G. Wells, "You should begin with duties and the rights will follow as the rainy season follows the summer." Unfortunately, in many walks of our national life, the responsibility has been pushed to the background. Even in Parliament, we have allowed our own rules to be slackened in an effort to buy peace with obstreperous elements.

* Congratulating Shri B.R. Bhagat on his election to the Office of Speaker, Lok Sabha., *L.S. Deb.*, 5 January, 1976, cc. 37-38.

In the last six months, a national effort has been made to regain discipline and self-restraint. It should be the endeavour of all sections and parties in this House to improve the functions of Parliament so that it is able to devote greater attention to the basic problems of our people and our country. In this task, a great burden will rest on the shoulders of the Speaker. I hope that each one of us in the House will try not to add to the burden but strive in every way to lighten it.

I should like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Dr. G.S. Dhillon for his services to the House, for the good humour with which he bore the strain and stress and for the consideration and fair-play he showed to all sections of the House.

Once again, on behalf of the House and on my own behalf I offer good wishes to the new Speaker and assure him of our fullest cooperation.

Felicitations to Shri Bal Ram Jakhar*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I congratulate you on your assumption of the high office of Speaker. May I also take this opportunity of extending my congratulations to all hon. Members of the House on their elections ?

Sir, traditionally today is the first day of spring, a day of new beginnings, a day devoted to learning and to culture. It is a coincidence that your election, Mr. Speaker, has taken place today. But that does not detract from the day or the event; rather it gives it added significance.

India is known for its adherence to the ancient. Yet, it is ever ready to meet new situations and new challenges. In a fast-changing world, the need is for a fresh outlook, not just periodical or occasional but constant and continuing.

You, Sir, are a son of the soil with personal experience of the difficulties of the largest section of our people, one on which we are all dependent for our survival. The Indian farmer is known not only for his sound common sense and practical approach but also for his devotion to our land. You have also wide knowledge of men and matters and are known for your culture and your courtesy. The present task is new to you just as membership of this august House is new to many of us.

I am sure you will soon find your way amongst the maze of rules and regulations and conventions and give fair and impartial treatment to all sections of the House. But let us not lose sight of two facts, one, that the rules are there not for themselves but to facilitate the functioning of the House; and secondly, that the purpose of this House is not merely to have discussions and debates, or indulge in verbal battles but to serve the people by attempting sincerely to find solutions for their multifarious and pressing problems.

The Speaker is the custodian of the noble traditions of the House. It is his task to uphold the dignity of this august House. Although my Party has the great privilege of enjoying a large majority, we expect no favours. We realise the importance of the Opposition. The Opposition must have its due. But I do hope that this does not mean obstructing the Government from discharging its onerous duties. We are here to do a job which has no parallel in size or complexity anywhere in the wide world. We seek the cooperation of all.

Once again, on behalf of the House and on my own behalf, I offer good wishes to the Speaker and assure him of our fullest cooperation.

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* Congratulating Shri Bal Ram Jakhar on his election to the Office of Speaker, Lok Sabha, *L.S. Deb.*, 22 January, 1980, cc. 4-5.

Felicitations to Shri M. Hidayatullah*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I offer my sincere congratulations to you on behalf of the Members of this House and on my own behalf. A wise provision in our Constitution requires the Vice-President to be the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. It is our good fortune to have had men of the highest character and standing as our Vice-Presidents—scholars with vast experience in different spheres of national activity. You Sir, are a jurist of great distinction and have held the highest judicial office in our country. To you, law is not merely a set of decrees to be enforced and obeyed, but the articulate conscience of our nation. It is well known that your concern was to ensure that laws fully reflect the imperatives of human justice no less than the eternal varieties of truth and freedom. Your pronouncements from the Bench have taken note of the aspirations of our people. We can be sure that your rulings from the Chair in this august House will be imbued with unswerving devotion to principles and proprieties. The two Houses of our Parliament are like two halves of the country's legislative heart. Members may be elected to the two Houses in different ways but in dedication to national welfare and the desire to redress the common people's difficulties, neither House would yield to the other. The Council of States is perennial while the House of the People is subject to dissolution and re-election. Thus, between them, the two Houses give us the advantages of continuity and change. We are indeed privileged to have a person of your eminence, experience and social vision as our Presiding Officer. I assure you of our fullest co-operation.

* Congratulating Shri M. Hidayatullah on his assumption of the Office of Chairman, Rajya Sabha, *R.S. Deb.*, 24 January, 1980, cc. 3-4.

Felicitations to Shri G. Lakshmanan*

May I take this opportunity of congratulating Shri G. Lakshmanan on his election as Deputy Speaker.

Shri G. Lakshmanan has wide experience of public life and also he has been a Member of the other House and this should stand him in good stead in safeguarding the rights and privileges of all sides of the House, of individual Members as well as in upholding the dignity and decorum of this august House. I extend a warm welcome to him and I give him our good wishes and assure him of our co-operation.

* Congratulating Shri G. Lakshmanan on his election to the Office of Deputy Speaker, Lok Sabha, *L.S. Deb.*, 1 February, 1980, c. 174.

Farewell to Dr. Zakir Husain*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are assembled here today for the last day of this session of the Rajya Sabha. It is not an ordinary ending. Members will reassemble in May. But we shall miss the familiar and respected face of our distinguished Chairman. I have been privileged to be a Member of this House for some time and although I am no longer a Member, I fully share the personal sense of parliamentary loss which, I know, hon. Members from both sides feel.

Sir, you have guided the deliberations of this august House for five years with great dignity, tact, impartiality, patience and understanding. When we have sometimes gone astray, you have gently brought us back to the fold. It is your manner and bearing as much as your rulings which have gained you our affection and our esteem. Even though you will not be here in this House, the traditions which you have laid down for the House will be cherished, remembered and followed.

I know I express the sentiments of hon. Members from all sections of the House, Sir, in offering you our grateful thanks, we wish you well in whatever the future brings to you. The lamp of scholarship and goodness is never extinguished, and I am sure that you will light the way for us wherever you may be and in whatever you may do.

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**Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak with a heavy heart. The country has suffered a grievous loss, and the world has lost a man of vision and compassion. Dr. Zakir Husain was a wise guide to our people. He reflected the best in the heritage of civilised man. He was an unusual amalgam of steadfastness and gentleness, representing the finest flowering of the composite culture of our country.

It is rare to find so integrated a personality as Dr. Zakir Husain's. His life was rich and varied. Every visit to him, every conversation with him was an enriching experience, and I think, Sir, that that was the feeling of most people who met him. He was a learned scholar, a thinker and a writer of distinction. Interested in people and nature, he was a connoisseur of creative arts and had a deep and abiding interest in the finer things of life. With his wealth of knowledge and experience, he had a disarming simplicity. Although he rose to the highest positions in the land, he retained the humility of true greatness and

* Farewell to the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, *R.S. Deb.*, 11 April, 1967, cc. 3248-49.

** Paying homage to Dr. Zakir Husain on his demise, *L.S. Deb.*, 5 May, 1969, cc. 1–3.

was proud to describe himself as a mere teacher. He was so little attracted to pomp and power that the high offices which he held had to be thrust upon him. He set the highest standards of conduct for himself, and every act and gesture of his was living proof of this high integrity, ennobling all around him. To the end of his days, he remained an elder statesman whose soft words of wisdom were heard in defence of all that is of enduring value in public life.

Many influences moulded his personality, the teaching of Islam and other great religions of our country and the world, the inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi and other great seekers of freedom and fight the liberal and humane philosophies of the West and the writings of the great poets and authors of all lands. He had an inquiring mind, not an accepting one. But he was free from dogma or narrowness of any kind and bent his fastidious intellect to a search for harmony and in the interests of a larger purpose.

It is two years since the nation elected him to this high office. I recall the controversy which was generated at that time. But I am sure that to-day every one in the country, without distinction of party, region or religion, would agree that Dr. Zakir Husain adorned the office of President with dignity, distinction and unblemished integrity. We did not elect him because he was a Muslim by birth and faith. We elected him because he was the most eminent Indian we could think of to be the first citizen of our Republic. And in the manner in which he conducted himself as President and earlier as Vice-President and Chairman of Rajya Sabha, he vindicated India's basic commitment to democracy and secularism.

As President and representative of India, he made a deep impression on the statesmen and people of other countries, and earned greater esteem and friendship for India.

This evening we shall lay to rest a great Indian, who belongs to the long line of sages and wise rulers of our ancient land. It is fitting that he should be laid to rest in an important centre of learning which he himself had built through his dedication and where practically every brick, book and tree he had chosen. He will be one with the soil, the flowers and the plants of the land he loved so much. Dr. Zakir Husain was a man who wanted our country to become a garden and a school. His gracious presence is no more but his gentle words of deep conviction and his example of dedication, compassion and tolerance will remain in our memory and become part of our conscience.

Mr. Speaker, as the Head of the Government I naturally mourn the death of the President. In the many difficult crises through which the country has passed during his brief tenure, he was a source of strength to my Government. But I remember him from the olden days of our freedom struggle. I remember also his long-standing comradeship with my father and other eminent leaders. This was a partnership which bound together all classes and castes, the old and the young in a common–cause, the unity, the freedom and the welfare of our people.

In paying homage to Dr. Zakir Husain, let us rededicate ourselves to our cherished values and to our unfinished tasks.

May I, Sir, on behalf of the Government and also on behalf of the whole House, request you to be good enough to convey to Dr. Zakir Husain's family our sincerest condolences as also the assurance that we share their sorrow ?

May I move a Resolution at this stage ? Sir, I beg to move :

That the Lok Sabha, assembled under the shadow of a national tragedy, expresses its profound sense of sorrow at the sudden death of the President of India, Dr. Zakir Husain, and pledges itself to promote the high ideals of patriotism, national unity, secularism and the service of humanity which he upheld.

Farewell to Smt. Violet Alva and Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I was glad to hear that yesterday the House decided to felicitate the Ex-leader of the House, Shri Hathi, and the Deputy Chairman, Mrs. Violet Alva. So, I should like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation and admiration for the manner in which Mrs. Alva functioned as the Deputy Chairman of this House under conditions which were difficult and full of tension and strain. She brought to bear upon the Chair a serious study of the Rules of Procedure and throughout the proceedings she remained firm and impartial and upheld the highest traditions of this august House. She was able to get through with the business of the House in good time. She jealously guarded the privileges of each Member and of the House as a whole....

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always trying to give maximum satisfaction and protection to each Member, She won the good will of the entire House. We regret that she has resigned as the Deputy Chairman but wherever she is and whatever task she undertakes she will be accompanied by our very best wishes.

We are also sorry that Shri Hathi no longer occupies his accustomed seat. We are all aware how he stood up in moments of crisis, never ruffled even when tempers were high, always cool in the midst of the heat which was generated in debate origin controversy. He always remained balanced in attitude. By training he is a lawyer and by practice a devoted public worker. He won the approbation of this House, always trying to accommodate as many points of view as possible. We give him also our best wishes.

* Paying tributes to the Ex-Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Smt. Violet Alva and the Ex-leader of the Rajya Sabha, Shri Jaisukhlal Hathi, *R.S. Deb.*, 18 November, 1969, cc. 314-15.

Farewell to Retiring Members*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, parting is always a matter of sorrow. Our friends who have spoken have been eloquent in recalling the events of past years, remembering the sacrifices and services, highlighting the spirit of comradeship and cooperation, of standing together in times good and bad. I have been–and I am sure all hon. Members who have listened have been–greatly moved by the sentiments expressed. Many of the hon. Members who are leaving the House have added to the dignity of the House and the quality of its debates. This is not an occasion for discussion although my senior friend, Shri T.N. Singh, has raised various points about planning and other matters. I should like to point out that we do not write on a clean slate. Whatever we do today has to be based, whether we like it or not, on what has gone before, on the situation which exists in our country, on the circumstances which surround us and outside and what is taking place in other countries. Not only the population problem, but other problems also will remain with us for many years to come. I do not think any of us have any illusions that these problems can be removed as if by magic.

Shri Singh has also mentioned something about what foreigners say. The question arises: Which foreigners ? The question also arises : What have these particular people said on other occasions ? Not only about democracy. They have questioned our fight for freedom, they have questioned our ability to remain independent, they have questioned our capacity to plan, they have questioned our ability to be democratic and they have questioned even our survival. I have seen headlines several inches high in Western newspapers and magazines : "Can India Survive ?" We are used to such propaganda and we take it in our stride. We should not be unduly agitated or angry or upset. When people say anything pertinent to our conditions and what can be helpful to us, we certainly take note of it.

Freedom of expression or other freedoms are not threatened. There are certain curbs. Those who say that democracy is not suitable know neither democracy nor do they know India. If democracy is not exactly as it was before, this is because it was being misused. The main question which I have put many times in this House and outside, is : Democracy for whom? Justice for whom? Freedom of expression for whom ? Sometimes we are confused in our minds. We think that the freedom of a few journalists is more important than the freedom of the vast majority of Indians to go ahead. Are these two incompatible? A particular atmosphere developed and I hold myself guilty of allowing it to develop as it did. Had we taken steps in good time, the situation would not have deteriorated as it did.

* Giving farewell to Members, *R.S. Deb.*, 1 April, 1976, cc. 128–31.

But now and always we must consider first the good of the Indian people. I was happy to hear my friend opposite speak about the unity of India, because that is the first essential. And that unity had been threatened.

Several quotations have been cited, I also should like to quote a few words from Mahatma Gandhi. They are from Tendulkar's *Mahatma,* Vol. VIII. When a group of socialists full of vituperation against the Congress High Command for the situation at that time which was mainly regarding the partition, went to see Mahatma Gandhi, he said and I quote:

> Note down these words of an old man past the age of three scores and ten. In the times to come, people will not judge us by the creed we profess or the lable we wear or the slogans we shout, but by our work, industry, sacrifice, honesty and purity of character. They will want to know what we have actually done for them. But if you do not listen, if taking advantage of the prevailing misery and discontent of the people, you set about to accentuate and exploit it for party ends, it will recoil upon your head and even God will not forgive you for your betrayal of the people.

With regard to freedom of expression also, I would like to give one small quote which you have probably heard before. Justice Holmes of the U.S.A. said that freedom of expression does not mean the freedom to shout fire in a crowded hall. Whatever we say is to be viewed in the context and conditions of the time.

Sir, we have a tradition in this House and in the country of not allowing political or personal differences to come in the way of human relations during these years, there have been acrimonous speeches in the House generating an atmosphere of heat and bitterness. But it has been our effort not to let this affect our relationship outside. I am sorry that I wrote what the hon. Member opposite has called an angry letter. I thought that I did not get angry. But, obviously, he must have written something which agitated me and if he has freedom to express his views, so have I the freedom to express mine. But if this was anger, it was not directed against him personally, but against some words which he might have used. I am not willing to concede that it was an angry letter.

As the hon. Member, Shri Jairamdas Doltaram has remarked there is plenty of work to be done outside and I am sure that all our retiring Members will continue to serve in their different ways. Wherever they are, they will have our sincere good wishes. Thank you, Sir.

Farewell to Shri M. Hidayatullah*

Mr. Chairman, Shri Mukherjee, hon. Members of the Rajya Sabha, I am glad to have this opportunity of saying a few words to join in the sentiments of this august House, but I rise with some sadness. We shall all miss Justice Hidayatullah.

Sir, you came to us after a distinguished legal and judicial career where you had attained the highest position. This dignity and long experience you brought to the Rajya Sabha. Initially you must have had a difficult time adapting to an environment of passion and noise, so different from the obedience of the court and the quiet companionship of Mother Nature on the golf course. But the training of a jurist juxtaposed with concentration and alertness so essential to score in golf makes an almost unflappable combination. So you soon found a close bond with the House. You have been not merely a distinguished Presiding Officer but also a guide, philosopher and friend to all of us, combining knowledge with humour and understanding. Even when your rulings may have been unpalatable to some on this side or on that side, they were readily accepted because of your fatherly and friendly manner. You deflated pomposity of any kind. If arguments became too heavy, you introduced lightheartedness, and if they were too flippant or superficial, you inducted the serious note which the subject deserved. Your apt quotations have enlivened the debates. Your witty remarks have often defused tension and brought harmony to the proceedings. I hope hon. Members will appreciate and will emulate your spirit of sportsmanship.

We all know what a store of entertaining anecdotes you had; and what a gracious host you have often been to us and others. I do not know if this is proper, but may I add that we should not under-estimate the qualities of the lady behind the scenes. Shri Hidayatullah has been supported ably and with grace by his charming wife and with her encouragement of the arts, her concern for the handicapped and other interests, adds new dimensions to their life and activities.

On behalf of the Government and my party, and on my own behalf, I give our very best wishes to you, Sir, and to Shrimati Pushpa Hidayatullah. We hope that your gifts of mind and heart and your wide experience will continue to be at the service of our people.

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* Farewell to the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, on his retirement, *R.S. Deb.*, 24 August, 1984, cc. 212-13.

12

MISCELLANEOUS

Celebrating Netaji's Birthday*

Sir, since the hon. Member referred to my ministry and brought in the question of featuring Netaji's birthday on All India Radio, I just want to say a few words. Firstly we have not categorised leaders.

A decision was taken that only Mahatma Gandhi's birthday would be celebrated every year. The birthday of other leaders is to be celebrated every five years.

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I am sorry, I do not know the basis for that.** This happened, I suppose, in the beginning, immediately after our Independence, and this has continued. Nehru's birthday happens to be celebrated as Children's Day and it was celebrated as that.

With regard to Netaji's birthday, the reply we had given to Shri Kamath was that we had thought that his 70th birthday was next year and we were planning for it. We have no objection—by 'next year' I mean 1967—to observing it in 1966 except that now the time is a little short and most radio programmes are planned a long time before. If hon. Members feel that it should be done in 1966 we have no objection.

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We can certainly consider*** that, but the point is whether the 70th birthday is being observed in 1966 or 1967. If you observe the 70th birthday in 1966, obviously you cannot observe it in 1967 again.

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We can consider that point****. But at that point of time it was the question of his 70th birthday.

I would like to say, Sir, that I do not think there is anybody in the Government who feels uncomfortable about Netaji's name. We are exceedingly proud of him. Many of us had the privilege and honour of knowing him personally and of working with him also. I

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* Participating (as the Minister of Information and Broadcasting) in the debate on the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1965 (a Private Member, Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath's Bill proposing amendment of the First Schedule), *L.S. Deb.*, 3 December, 1965, cc. 5538-40. (The Bill was later withdrawn.)

** Replying to Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath's remark, "What was the basis for that decision ?"

*** Responding to suggestions of Shri Priya Gupta and Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath that a token programme would do.

**** Replying to Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath's remark, "The point is about celebrating his birthday, his Jayanti every year".

do not think that we in any way want to denigrate his memory. In fact, we know that the "Jai Hind" slogan has been popularised as an all India slogan, and I hope it will continue. If, there is any other way in which we can honour his name we shall certainly take steps in that direction.

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As this matter has only been just brought up—when I was asked to be present here I had no idea as to why my presence was required* –I can assure the hon. Member that we will certainly consider that. Let us observe this one first and then we will consider the other one.

* Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath wanted to know the Government's position on having a special broadcast on Netaji's Jayanti day every year and not merely every five years.

Drought and Famine Conditions in Orissa*

Sir, I returned yesterday afternoon from a two-day tour of the areas acutely affected by drought and scarcity in Orissa. On the eve of my departure, I extended my stay in the State as originally proposed, by an extra day so as to have a fuller idea of the prevailing situation. I had occasion to visit ten villages in the three worst affected districts of Kalahandi, Sambalpur and Bolangir, including some which were not on schedule and which were selected on the spot, for surprise visits. At my request my colleagues Shri Jaganatha Rao and Shrimati Nandini Satpathy, who accompanied me, went to another three villages for which I could not myself find time; Shrimati Satpathy went to two villages to which I was to go, while I went to two others which were not on schedule.

Apart from addressing large gatherings at Senapalli, Khariar and Padampur, I had the opportunity to meet and talk to a large number of villagers, wherever I went specially Adivasis and Harijans—and to visit their homes and see their families and children. I visited many gratutions relief and free feeding centres, school centres for feeding children, sites where relief works were in progress and centres for the distribution of loans and seed. I also had occasion to meet the honourable Member of this House from this area, and some Members of the State Legislature including those of the Opposition Party, local officials, Panchayat leaders, representatives of voluntary agencies working in the area, students and youth representatives, as well as others.

I was naturally distressed to see conditions in these affected areas. It was obvious that the people had suffered considerable hardships. There is unprecedented drought and scarcity, and an acute lack of purchasing power. At the same time I was somewhat relieved to find that the situation is under control as a result of the energetic measures taken by the State Government. But there is no room whatsoever for complacency. On the contrary, there is great need for administering the relief programme with the utmost possible efficiency and despatch and for a very vigilant eye on the situation.

My colleague, the Food Minister, apprised the House the other day of various measures taken to provide relief in the affected areas. The State Government have already strengthened the relief machinery at various levels and appointed a senior officer as Special Relief Commissioner to co-ordinate and direct relief work; he accompanied us during the tour. The relief programme has now been revised upwards to provide for an outlay of nearly 9 crore. A sum of Rs. 1.35 crore was made available to the Orissa Government some time ago for expenditure on relief, and a further sum of Rs. 2 crore is being released today to

* Making a Statement regarding her visit to Orissa, *L.S. Deb.*, 16 May, 1966, cc. 17139-143, 148-152.

provide ways and means support for further expenditure. I have emphasised that neither rigidity of procedure or formality, nor lack of resources should be allowed to come in the way of the programme, and such further needs as arise and are agreed upon will be similarly met.

As the Food Minister announced the other day, the number of people covered under gratuitous relief which is meant for the old, the disabled and the infirm is being increased by the State Government to 2,00,000. The number of free feeding centres has also been increased. Some road-works are being undertaken to provide widespread employment to people; 10,000 wells are included in the programme out of which 3,000 are to be made *pucca* immediately, and the remaining after the rains. Other similar works are being undertaken, including those which can continue during the monsoon. Some medical teams are already at work; more will be sent.

One of the most important and urgent needs of the affected people is the adequate and timely supply of seed requirements for the next Kharif crop. A programme for the procurement and supply of 4 lakh maunds of seed by the middle of June has been drawn up and is under execution. Side by side, Rs. 3·5 crore of taqavi has been arranged. The original limits for the grant of taqavi have been liberalised to provide loans at the rate of about Rs. 100 per acre upto the limit of Rs. 800 to the same party. I have impressed upon the State Government and the officials concerned, the importance of timely implementation of this programme and they have assured me that they will keep the target date so that difficulties of movement in the rainy season do not come in the way.

One of the questions raised concerned the actual wages earned by people volunteering themselves for relief works. The State Government have agreed firstly, that as far as possible panchayat and other agencies will be utilised to organise these works, with a view to minimising reliance on middlemen; and secondly, that in the pattern of wages paid, a minimum earning of the value of one rupee per head per day is ensured for subsistence, irrespective of output, with more for anyone who is entitled to it on the basis of his actual work.

There has been a demand in some quarters for the supply of paddy instead of milled rice. It appears that the bulk of the supplies have already been converted into rice, and the stocks of paddy available are now relatively limited; also, I was told that the actual demand for paddy might not be much. However, the State Government have agreed to arrange for some stocks of paddy to be sent to the affected areas where there might be demand.

The problem of the high price at which rice was being sold was also brought up and it has now been decided firstly, to subsidise rice in selected areas of specially acute distress; and secondly, to supply partly wheat and partly rice in areas where this combination will be appropriate, thereby bringing down the overall purchase price.

I was particularly concerned, as I am sure the House will also be, about the health and welfare of children in the scarcity-affected areas. I have advised the State Government to consider extending the scope of the children's midday feeding programme to non-school going children, at least in the pockets which are specially hard hit. At one such feeding

centre I saw that this had, already been started in a small way. I have also suggested that a suitable person might be attached to the Special Relief Commissioner to help him coordinate the Health and Child Welfare programmes.

For the next agricultural season, apart from loans and seed to which I have referred earlier, the State Government are arranging to press into service all available power-tillers and some tractors to help cultivators plough their lands, subsidising the service in the case of the more needy.

My anxiety is as much about the long-term needs of this very backward area as about its immediate needs. It is obvious that this area has not yet received the impact of development programmes in any appreciable manner. This state of affairs cannot be permitted to continue and we must devise an accelerated programme for its long-term development on the basis of priority. I am asking my colleague, the Planning Minister, to go into this matter at an early date in consultation with the Planning Commission so that we can undertake this task as early as may be practicable.

I was deeply touched by the affection and kindness with which people received me everywhere, in large numbers, in spite of the gruelling heat. I was also heartened to see their spirit and high morale regardless of the present difficulties.

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The first question is whether this is a famine or not. As, I think, the Food Minister has mentioned in this House on an earlier occasion, the States have their own famine codes. According to the conditions for declaring famine under the State code, it is not a famine. Nevertheless, the State Government has adopted a number of relief measures which are generally more liberal than what the famine code would provide. I do not think it makes much difference what word is used, provided all that is necessary to be done is being done.

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I would certainly like to have it done on as much war footing as possible. I think that can be done when everybody joins in that. Fortunately, the public is being very helpful, and even students who are now having their holidays are wanting to help. There is just one problem where students want help. They want to be fed. This causes a little difficulty because people who go from the city also want to be fed. There, perhaps, we can made some arrangements by which their own organisations can undertake to feed them.

In Sambalpur—I am afraid I did not have much time to go to the other areas—I did go into the reports about deaths which were supposed to have taken place on account of starvation. I looked in great detail into the enquiry reports, and I think the number which is now being quoted in this House is far from anywhere near reality and it is absolutely ridiculous.

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I looked into some of the reports which the Commissioner had got from different places. My general impression was that there have been some cases in which deaths have occurred.

But generally these cases had a background of age, of ill-health and disease. It is also true that this is an area which has been very very poor where the people have been living on a very low diet for—I do not know, for how many years—I must say, about a hundred years. It was the hon. Member, Shri Dwivedy, who showed us some *mahuwa* and other things. As I was going from village to village, I noticed some people, almost like in small meetings under a tree. I stopped the car and went to them. The ladies among them came and showed me what they were eating. In the course of the conversation I asked them : "Is it the first year that you are eating this, or have you been eating this before ?" They replied, "We always eat this."

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They denied eating it.* But it was in their baskets. When I asked them: "Do you also eat this", one of the ladies said "No". Obviously, I have not been to other places and I could not have seen those particular places which are the worst affected.

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Whenever we wanted to go to a place as originally fixed, somebody, for instance, from the Opposition, some local people, used to come and say that we should not go to that place but instead we should go to some other villages. So we dropped the original one and went to the other village. I did not see any persons who looked as if they were going to die or who looked specially thin and so on.

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It is not correct.** As I said, the police did not even know where I would be going. When I wanted to go to a village, some people used to say that instead of that village I should go to some other village. Immediately I sent Shrimati Satpati in the direction in which I was to have gone and I went in the other direction. So there was no question of the police being near me, the police were all in Bhuvaneswar, not in these areas.

I must confess that the people who really seemed to be suffering were the very old people and weak children. I saw a number of children with distended stomaches. But those who were part of the food programme were looking well. That is why I lay stress that apart from the distribution of seeds, which of course is of first importance to farmers, the children's programme should get top priority. I think we will be able to do that. The difficulty is now of personnel and collecting those who do not go to school. But through the panchayats and with the help of voluntary workers I think this may be manageable.

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Shri Surendranath Dwivedi made a mention about giving paddy. I myself did ask the people in the villages, mostly women and none of the women I asked showed a preference

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* Replying to Shri Surendranath Dwivedy's remark, "Peepal leaves".

** Replying to Shri Surendranath Dwivedy's query, "Whether it was right that the police did not allow anyone to meet the Prime Minister."

for paddy. They felt that it would involve extra work and that it would be much easier to have rice. In spite of this, I told the Chief Minister who was with me that because people had made this demand paddy may be made available in some villages. If the Government felt that the people wanted it they might make efforts to give more.

Regarding the Indravati project, the hon. Member, Shri P.K. Deo, gave me a memorandum on it. As I mentioned in my statement also, we shall certainly look into this.

So far as the long-term and short-term measures are concerned. I have already spoken about the short-term measures. Regarding long-term measures, most of the adivasis live in areas where there is very bad communication. This is a great difficulty. Therefore, it is very important now to build up communcation now. Also, most of the roads are such that during the rains the rivers and nullahs overflow and it is not easy to go. If something can be done to make that small bit *pucca*, I think that would be of help. There are many such things.

*** *** ***

Wells are being dug.* The existing tanks are cleaned. In some places the people have dug canals of their own. They wanted to be reimbursed for that, and we are looking into it. But the major thing, of course, is irrigation, communication and, as far as the Adivasis and Harijans are concerned, some kind of multi-purpose food. I think, if we put forward these programmes, this would go a long way towards helping them. But the problem is such an old one, such a vast one, I must say it is not only in Orissa. You will find such people in every part of India and certainly in eastern U.P. So, this is something which is not easy to do and it cannot be done very quickly. But certainly it can be taken in hand as soon as possible.

Somebody mentioned whether this was like the Bengal Famine. This is nothing like that at all. There, it was a question of people dropping dead.

*** *** ***

From what I have read of the Bengal Famine—because I was not out then—and heard from those who worked there is that the stories were quite different.

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* Responding to Shri Tyagi's question, "Is there any plan to provide irrigation facilities to villages wherever it is possible?"

Resignation by Shri Gulzarilal Nanda*

Sir, I received Shri Nanda's letter only late last evening as well as the copy of his Press statement, both of which have appeared in the Press today. I have no desire to join issue with or comment upon the observations made by Nandaji either in his letter or in his statement to the Press. I do not think that it would serve any public purpose to go into them (*Interruption*). I would only like to say, it was after deep and most anxious thought and with much regret that I decided to recommend to the President's acceptance of Shri Nanda's resignation (*Interruption*). Speaking personally, it has been a matter of painful parting of an old and trusted colleague whose hard work and integrity were appreciated by us all. As I have said to Shri Nanda in my letter, I hope that his cooperation and wise counsel will continue to be available to us, the Government and this country.

*** *** ***

Sir, I am very sorry that Nandaji has the impression that I was not giving my fullest co-operation to him. I can assure the House that I tried to give the utmost co-operation and to the best of my ability. It can be that I did not agree with some of the things which he wanted and which I had to look at from a larger perspective.

*** *** ***

One of the things which I wanted to say is this. It has been taken for granted here in the House and perhaps also by Nandaji that I accepted his resignation because of the happenings on that particular day in Delhi. This is not so. It is not at all my intention to lay the blame for what has happened on Nandaji's shoulders. (*Interruptions*).

*** *** ***

The responsibility, as I said in my speech the other day, Sir, is one which is shared by all of us here; not only the Government but the Opposition and many people outside who have been creating an atmosphere which has led upto the events which have taken place here and in other parts of the country. We cannot run away from that fact; no matter how much shouting there is, that fact remains. (*Interruptions*). As far as the appointment of the Secretary is concerned, that is a departmental affair. There is a special Appointments Committee of the Cabinet which goes into this matter. (*Interruptions*)

*** *** ***

* Making a Statement regarding the resignation of the Home Minister, Shri Gulzarilal Nanda and responding to the points raised by Members regarding the motions for adjournment and Calling Attention Notices given by them in connection with his resignation, *L.S. Deb.*, 10 November, 1966, cc. 2494-95, 2510–22.

It is the Minister's responsibility as to what policy is followed.* Who decides the policy in a particular ministry, it is the Minister's responsibility surely.

*** *** ***

It is not a question of lie.** It is for the Minister to support whatever suggestions are made by Secretaries or not to support them and tell them that he wishes to follow another direction.

*** *** ***

I do not know what matters of policy are referred to here.*** The matter which was referred to in the letter was with regard to the change of Secretary. (*Interruptions*) Mr. Gopalan has asked a specific question regarding integrity at different levels of Government's working. It is not possible to give a categorical answer. There are cases when there is not, and the House knows that we go into those cases. Nandaji himself was responsible for setting up Vigilance Officers. We are not changing that. (*Interruptions*).

*** *** ***

I do not think there is a case for enquiry.**** But I shall certainly look into the points he has raised.

*** *** ***

The Home Minister did ask for the removal of his Secretary.***** But as I said earlier, many Ministers are asking for either the appointment or the removal of a particular Secretary.

*** *** ***

The Home Ministry comes along with other Ministries in this.@ I have to look at it and decide in the larger interest which person should be where. I gave my reasons to the Home Minister for that.

*** *** ***

I cannot say when the Appointment Sub-committee began.@@ It was certainly there since I have come into the Government, since Shastriji was there. (*Interruption*) I am told now it was there before also. It consists of the Prime Minister, the Home Minister and the concerned Minister.

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* Replying to Shri A.K. Gopalan's query as to whether it is the Ministers or Secretaries who decide the policy.

** Responding to Shri A.K. Gopalan's remark, "That means what Nandaji said is a lie".

*** Answering Shri A.K. Gopalan's question, "Did the Prime Minister support him in his policy ?"

**** Replying to Shri Warior who wanted to know whether the Prime Minister would institute any inquiry into the charges levelled against the Secretary and Secretariat and others by Shri Nandaji.

***** Replying to Shri Vasudevan Nair's question as to whether the Home Minister wanted to remove his Secretary and whether the issue was brought to her attention.

@ Replying to Shri Ranga's remark, "The Home Ministry is supposed to be in charge of all these".

@@ Shri Ranga wanted to know when did the Appointment Sub-committee come into existence and who were its members.

Earthquake in Western India*

May I just say a few words? I do not have much information just now, but I should like to say a few words if you will allow me.

I should like to express my deep distress at the great human tragedy which has been caused by the earthquake in western India. It is one of the severest we have had and certainly the biggest ever felt in that area. It has resulted, as the hon. Members know, in a high death toll. We do not, as yet, have the full figures because it is only as they remove the debris and the information comes in from towns and villages that the full extent of the loss will be known. But we know that there had been extensive damage to property. The Home Minister happened to be in Maharashtra when this news reached him and he flew immediately to Koynanagar. Yesterday when the news came to Delhi, our Minister, Dr. K.L. Rao, rushed immediately to the Koyna Dam. According to present information, no damage has been done to the Dam.

I should like to read out a report which has come from the Director-General of the Meteorological Department. He says :—

"A major earthquake shock took place at 04 hours 21 minutes Indian Standard Time on the 11th December, 1967. The epicentre of this shock has been located about 115 kilometres south of Poona near Koyna. According to the records of the Delhi Observatory, the magnitude of the shock was 7 $^{1}/_{2}$ in the Richter Scale, which will class it as a major shock capable of causing severe damage near the epicentre. Available reports indicate that the shock has been felt widely upto Surat in the north and Bangalore in the south. Poona city was severely shaken. Radio reports indicate that 1500 people were injured and about 105 were killed, as far as we know".

I have received a piece of news just now and that is that the tremors were again felt in Bombay around 11.58 A.M. and in several areas, people came out of their houses, on finding their doors and windows rattling.

May I express my sense of deep sorrow at this calamity and request you to convey our sincere sympathies to the families of the bereaved?

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* Statement regarding Earthquake in Western India, *L.S. Deb.*, 12 December, 1967, cc. 6322-23.

Floods*

†...Mr. Speaker, Sir, our country is facing a great calamity on account of floods. This calamity is a matter of great concern and sorrow for all of us. The hon. Minister in his statement on floods has told that many villages and cities including bridges and other things have been submerged and as a result thereof thousands of people have lost their lives. This flood has swept away the houses of lakhs of people. It has caused havoc in Assam, Bengal, Rajasthan, Kerala and now it is affecting Gujarat, especially Surat. In the beginning I visited some places but due to Parliament being in session, I could not visit many places. It is true when such a great calamity befalls we have to divert all our resources there and all possible efforts are made to get rid of that calamity. Here, I would like to clarify that at times our visits to these places add to the difficulties of those people, because they are required to make a lot of arrangements for us...

*** *** ***

The need of the hour is to provide relief to the flood affected people. We can express sympathy from here itself. **But taking concrete relief measure is much more important than simply expressing our sympathy. It is strange that we have been facing a drought for the last two or three years. Some areas are still reeling under drought but at the same time we are also facing severe flood situation at many other places. When faced with drought conditions, we had concentrated our entire efforts to remove the sufferings of the drought affected people. We have tried our best to start relief work for them and we should start implementation of all the relief measures in order to avoid recurrence of drought on such a large scale in future, and even then if such conditions recur, the people must have sufficient resources to combat it. As Shri Manubhai has said, I also wish that same efforts should be made this time too.

Just now an hon. Member*** has said that no one should take political mileage out of it, but he himself has started his speech exactly on the same line. Anyway, I do not want to say more about it, I am only inviting the attention of the House towards it. We do not want any politics in it. Due to this flood, a large number of people of the country are facing

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* Participating in the debate on a Motion regarding the flood situation in the country, *L.S. Deb.*, 12 August, 1968, cc. 1691-95.

† Original speech in Hindi.

** Responding to Shri Om Prakash Tyagi's suggestion, "You should go, because by such visits affected people get sympathy and consolation".

*** Shri C.C. Desai.

a grave crisis. In Gujarat, and at some other places many people are in deep distress. Today we all should face and resolve it unitedly by treating it as a national crisis.

I am surprised to hear all that has been said here about Gujarat. It was alleged that opposition members were not allowed to visit there. Actually sometimes we used to hear such things about other persons, but so far as the Chief Minister of Gujarat is concerned, he is known for his ability to take all the people with him. I said it because I was a bit surprised to know all this. This hon. Member has said that he perhaps could not go there in the helicopter. I do not know how many helicopters are there and how many people can be accommodated in one helicopter ? All these things would be looked into.

The same thing has been said in regard to the people accompanying me during my visits. I always try to accommodate all those Members of the House who belong to the State or Constituency which I visit. I never mind whether the Members accompanying me belong to Congress or any other Party and on one or two occasions, non-Congress people have also accompanied me.

At this juncture on behalf of Government of India, I want to express deep sympathies towards all the flood victims and I hope that whatever aid they require will be provided to them. The Government will ensure that sufficient relief is provided to these victims. But at the same time we have to take concrete steps so as to control floods in future by giving a serious thought to this issue.

Foodgrains, had also been the topic of discussion here. It is for the first time that I have heard such a thing here. Just before the hon. Member* spoke about it, I had received a telephone call from Gujarat in this regard, and we are looking into it on a priority basis. I do not want to say anything more. I want to express my heartiest sympathies again towards the bereaved families who have lost their kith and kin. Besides, it is necessary that we all must make concerted efforts together to solve this problem and to take steps to provide relief to the affected people so that they do not suffer again. But at the same time, I would like to say that this is a gigantic problem which cannot be easily solved.

It requires a lot of resources and funds but as I said earlier, we must try to solve it by making concerted efforts as well as by treating it as a national problem. When we are paying attention to increase foodgrain production, we should also take initiative to tackle the flood and drought problems with equal seriousness.

* Shri C.C. Desai.

Business Connections of Relatives of Ministers*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I first say just a word about the admission of this motion ? It is true, Sir, that you had referred the motion to me and to the Deputy Prime Minister. But we were informed by your Secretariat that you had already admitted it and you were asking only about the time of its discussion.

*** *** ***

I am rather distressed that senior Members of this House such as the hon. Members Shri Masani or Shri Vajpayee should have introduced a new element in this discussion by quoting from newspapers which are not known either for their objectivity.

*** *** ***

Perhaps they believe that what they suggested reflects some kind of Machiavellian wisdom or strategy but it is, I am sorry to say, merely cheap political propaganda and, if I may say so, wishful thinking on their part. Some extraordinary charges have been made. I am glad that the two Ministers here have refuted them. I think, the charges are as irrelevant as they are ridiculous.

*** *** ***

I have noticed the great interest which the Opposition parties always display in the unity of our side. They themselves, of course, combine only for one thing. Hon. Member. Shri Dwivedy, said it himself, so I can quote him. They want to make every effort to oust this Government. Many methods have been tried and one after the other they have failed. So now there is one more effort to divide us by making allegations and spreading all kinds of rumours. I should like to tell them that the Congress Party is not going to assist them in their designs into reality....(*Interruption*).

The Deputy Prime Minister** has made a comprehensive statement dealing with the points raised and has already given to this House the details of his son's business connections.

It is no one's case, except the venerable Acharyaji's that the sons or other near relations of ministers should not engage in business. Indeed, Shri Kantilal Desai has been in business

* Speaking on the Motion on the Deputy Prime Minister's Statement regarding his son's business connections, *L.S. Deb.*, 19 August, 1968, cc. 2808-11.

** Shri Morarji Desai.

for some considerable time. He was in business even when the Deputy Prime Minister was a Union Minister from 1957 to 1963, which I might remind the last speaker on that side, was for more than three years. Hon. Members opposite have not charged that there was anything wrong in that. Then there is a period between 1963, when Shri Morarji Desai left office, until he joined Government again in March 1967. It was during this period that Shri Kantilal Desai gradually severed his connections with most of the firms with which he was concerned. Today he is director of one private limited company and one proprietary firm which, according to the statement made by the Deputy Prime Minister, has ceased to do any fresh business.

We all agree that while there is no bar to the sons and relatives of ministers carrying on normal and legitimate business, there is an obligation, as the hon. Members opposite and also on our side have pointed out, as much on such relatives as on ministers themselves that there should be no occasion for any doubt to be raised that relationship with the Minister has been utilised for the advancement of any business.

Hon. Members opposite have not produced evidence in support of the charge that Shri Kantilal Desai used his position as a son to promote his business interests. Indeed, the Deputy Prime Minister has, categorically, stated in his statement today that he has sought to ensure that his son did not come anywhere near the discharge of his official responsibilities. I have no reason to doubt that the Deputy Prime Minister has assured himself of this.

The essence of the charge in Shri Madhu Limaye's motion is that in making certain statements, the Deputy Prime Minister has, deliberately, misled the House to an extent which would amount to a breach of privilege of this House and would attract the disapproval of the House.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, on two separate occasions, you have ruled that, in fact, there was no breach of privilege. It is, therefore, clear that whatever the hon. Member opposite might say regarding the adequacy or otherwise of the statements made by the Deputy Prime Minister, there was no wilful or intentional misrepresentation. What then is the motive attributed to him specially since, at that time, he was not in office ?

Public life imposes a heavy burden of duties and the responsibilities on us all and none is more onerous than being called upon to sit in judgment over the actions of one's colleagues and specially on those whose lives have been spent in public service. My colleague, the Deputy Prime Minister, as many Members have pointed out has to his credit many years of devoted and dedicated public service. He has, through the years, come to occupy a position of eminence in public life. No one has cast aspersions on his personal integrity. When I am accused of dereliction of duty in not calling upon the Deputy Prime Minister to resign, I am bound to ask : What case the hon. Members opposite have made out which should impel me to oblige them, and to part with a trusted colleague ? The statement made by the Deputy Prime Minister clarifies the context in which he had made the earlier statements.

I submit that the Motion before us is misconceived and deserves to be rejected.

Third Pay Commission*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the question of appointing a Pay Commission to review the pay structure and other conditions of service of Central Government Employees has been under examination for sometime. Government have taken a decision, in principle, to appoint a new Commission for the purpose. Questions like its composition, coverage and terms of reference are under active examination and as soon as these details are finalised, an announcement will be made, if possible in the course of the current session.

*** *** ***

Government had made it clear that Government regarded a need-based wage as an important objective of their socio-economic policy and that it could be said that the Gajendragadkar Commission on labour was seized of the question.** That Commission has since made its report, and on this particular question the Commission has expressed the view that the principle of a national minimum wage to be determined in monetary terms is not practicable. They have also accepted in principle that the capacity to pay will be relevant consideration in determining a need-based minimum. They have also stated that they are not in a position to quantify a need-based wage in money terms or to assess Government's capacity to pay. These matters have been left by them to be gone into by a Pay Commission.

As I said in the statement, the terms of reference of the new Pay Commission are under consideration. However, it is our intention that it should be open to the Commission to consider this question in all its aspects. The previous Commission also considered similar issues.

The House is aware that our general sympathy on this issue is with the workers, but the question is a rather complicated one in terms of what is possible and practicable. The matter was considered by the Second Pay Commission, but they neither accepted nor rejected the demand. So, we would like this question to be considered in all its aspects by the new Pay Commission as was recommended by Shri Gajendragadkar.

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* Making a Statement in response to a Calling Attention regarding the appointment of Pay Commission for the Central Government employees, *L.S. Deb.*, 21 November, 1969, cc. 376-84.

** Replying to Shri Surendranath Dwivedy who asked, "....Since Government here have accepted in principle a need-based wage, will the New Commission be given a time-limit for the submission of their final report and will a time-limit also be set for its implementation? Also will this Commission go into the question of the determination of scales of wages taking a need-based wage as the basis?"

Some hon. Members said that the previous Commission's recommendations had not been accepted. As far as I know, seeking subject to correction, by and large they were accepted, and in fact, in regard to some aspect like family pension, we went beyond the recommendation.

*** *** ***

The matters to be considered are very complicated. It is very difficult for us to give a time-limit. We can only say that the last Commission, as hon. Members know, took about two years.

*** *** ***

If I can start speaking.* I can take up the points. If I am not allowed even to begin replying, obviously I cannot give a reply. Perhaps I used the wrong word. I do not mean 'jhagra' in that sense. One of the main demands was for a Pay Commission....

*** *** ***

Government had not agreed to it. Now we have agreed to it. As for as possible we try to accept the recommendations. In this case we shall certainly try to do so but it is not possible to give assurance....(*Interruptions*).

*** *** ***

Coming to the question of interim relief, I think we should leave this matter also to the Pay Commission, not to wait for the final report but to take interim recommendations. (*Interruptions*)

*** *** ***

We will consider all these points when we set up the Pay Commission.** As I said, the previous Commission took about two years to finalise its recommendations. I would certainly hope that this Commission finishes its work in less time, if possible; certainly, not more than that. The recommendations of the Second Pay Commission were largely accepted and statements have been made in the House explaining the items which were accepted as well as those in regard to which some departures were found necessary.

*** *** ***

It must be left to the Pay Commission to take all points of view, to consider all aspects and then come to conclusions.

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* Replying to the demand made by Shri George Fernandes. He said that he wanted arbitration and not Pay Commission.

** Shri N. Shivappa desired an assurance from the Prime Minister that the terms of reference for the Pay Commission would include consideration of those points which would enhance incentive for work and asked why should State officials be differentiated from the Central officials in the matter of emoluments.

Meetings Between Shri T.T. Krishnamachari and Some Government Officials*

...Shri P.C. Sethi did say that he had come here with full authority because this matter had come up suddenly and I had a previous engagement which I could not get out of, and, therefore, I posted him with the full picture and he made a statement. He said I do not remember his exact words—that 'the Prime Minister will not be able to add to what I have said.' I have nothing to add to what he has said in that context.

*** *** ***

I would request Shri Kanwarlal Gupta to let me be heard patiently.** Also I am talking as fast as I can; I am not going slow.

Shri Dwivedy has now mentioned an officer*** by name. Another hon. Member also talked about files being taken. I can assure hon. Members that almost every day many people, and amongst them MPs, including Members from the Opposition—those sitting on this side also—of the Swantantra Party and others quite often come to give their suggestions as to what they think should be done, not with regard to the Budget, but general suggestions with regard to the economy and so on.

Now Shri T.T. Krishnamachari also mentioned certain things saying that he would like to give some ideas. Some illustrative examples were given; there was also follow-up of the nationalisation of banks and so on. Shri Dwivedy should know that Shri Bakshi has nothing to do with budget-making. He is there purely to see to the follow-up of the nationalisation of banks (*Interruptions*). I am coming to every single point, if only they will just sit and listen.

*** *** ***

I would request Shri Dwivedy to sit down. I will answer every point. If I do not, he can ask me at the end.

Shri Dwivedy said that Shri Bakshi made some notes on a file. I do not know if he kept a record of what Shri T.T. Krishnamachari said. But I am assured by all these officers

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* Making a Statement regarding meetings between some Government officials and Shri T.T. Krishnamachari, *L.S. Deb.*, 3 December 1969, cc. 222-26.

** Reacting to Shri Kanwarlal Gupta's remark, "What about the talks ?"

*** Shri Bakshi.

that they did not say anything, they just listened to the suggestions which Shri T.T.K. made.

*** *** ***

Some of the suggestions that he made were a little complicated which had naturally to be looked into to see whether they could be worked. This had nothing to do with the Budget—on that I can assure you. But I will certainly look into the fact whether any notes were kept. If so, I am prepared, Sir, to show them to you.

*** *** ***

I did not direct anybody to meet Shri T.T.K.*

If they ask me 'Can I go and meet so and so ?** I have said 'yes'. But I did not say, 'you have to go and meet him'. I did not direct them to do so. (*Interruptions*).

Mention was made of a specific name. He is an officer whom Shri T.T. Krishnamachari had known before. That officer also paid a courtesy call on him (*Interruptions*). Courtesy calls have been paid on many Members.

*** *** ***

When Shri T.T.K. asked for an appointment with me, he asked if I could call such and such official because he had left notes and so on previously about one or two of these matters and he would like them to be there. I saw no objection to it.

Therefore, it is true that on that occasion when Shri T.T. Krishnamachari came to see me, I did ask these officers whether they would be present.

I have assured the House that it had absolutely nothing to do with the Budget; it was not mentioned either by Shri T.T.K. or by any of the officials.

Shri Sethi mentioned by way of illustration the sort of things that was discussed. As I said, some of these officials may have kept notes about these matters or anything that was discussed. These I am prepared to show you. There is no question of anybody removing any file or any paper from any file. There was no question of taking any file. I would like to assure hon. Members about this matter because I can fully understand Members' great concern if official files and secrets are discussed with people who are not authorised. Shri T.T.K. himself has made a statement on this matter that he has not discussed this question.

Shri Kanwarlal Gupta made the point that some official got up from the gallery here. He might have, but I do not think it is right to link this or connect this with that. I must say that I was unaware of this particular visit till it was mentioned here. It was only when it was mentioned here that Mr. Bakshi had met him, it was told and I enquired he said :

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* Replying to Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's question, "Who directed the officers to meet Shri T.T.K."

** Dr. Ram Subhag Singh intervened, "But that was what Shri Sethi said yesterday that she asked them to go and see them" and also Shri Rabi Ray remarked, "She is contradicting herself."

Yes, I was because he had some ideas and T.T.K. wanted to discuss about the follow-up measures.... (*Interruptions*)

*** *** ***

*Mr. Vice-Chairman as certain observations were made on the floor of the House regarding the meetings which some officers of the Finance Ministry had with Shri T.T. Krishnamachari I have sought your leave to place the following facts before the House :

Shri T.T. Krishnamachari was recently in Delhi and he met me. In the course of these meetings I naturally had occasion to exchange ideas with him on many subjects. Shri Krishnamachari conveyed certain ideas to me and suggestions in regard to social and economic development. It was with my approval that some of our officers of the Finance Ministry met Shri Krishnamachari to seek clarifications and enlightenment in respect of these ideas. Government categorically repudiates that in the course of these meetings the officers took any files or official records to him or divulged Government thinking on policy matters.

*** *** ***

Sir, the first question asked was whether I had directed any officer to go and meet him.** I did not direct any officer to do that but if an officer asked me whether he could go and meet him, I gave my approval. Now I have said in the Statement that no Budget or taxation proposal was discussed. In fact I do not think it would be right even to call these things discussions as such because Shri Krishnamachari gave his ideas and they had absolutely nothing to do with the Budget or taxation. The people who met him, except for the Finance Secretary, are not directly concerned with the Budget. For instance, the hon. Member mentioned Shri Bakshi. Shri Bakshi has recently joined the Finance Ministry to take charge of the newly formed Banking Department and his talk with him was merely with regard to the follow-up action of nationalisation of the 14 banks.Shri Bakshi merely went to pay a courtesy call during which Shri Krishnamachari gave a few ideas. Shri Bakshi has said that he did not make any noting whatsoever on any matter discussed with him including taxation; taxation and so on did not come into that conversation at all. There were other people present there and most of the talk was of a general and social nature.

Then the hon. Member asked the matters that were discussed. As the hon. Member perhaps knows, Shri Krishnamachari came to meet me in my office here in Parliament and there were some officers present there. The officers told me that the same subjects were mentioned earlier when they met him and these are broadly—I do not want to go into the whole list—the question of family pension, housing, rural development, etc. These were some of the questions and, of course, the follow-up of the nationalisation of banks. He also gave some ideas with regard to the ceiling on urban property. I would like to

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* Making a Statement regarding meeting of four senior officers of the Finance Ministry with Shri T.T. Krishnamachari, *R.S. Deb.* 4 December, 1969, cc. 2929-48.

** Replying to Shri Mulka Govinda Reddy who *inter-alia* wanted to know whether the Prime Minister had directed senior officers of the Finance Ministry to meet Shri Krishnamachari and discuss with him certain economic matters; and whether the officers, who were under oath of secrecy, were entitled to discuss matters concerning finance with a person, however eminent he might have been.

categorically say that at no stage was any Budget or taxation measure discussed. I would also categorically repudiate any allegation or insinuation to the effect that there has been a record of the discussions with any of the Secretaries of the Finance Ministry, which contains a reference to taxation matters.

*** *** ***

Sir, there seems to be some mixing-up.* They went there as a matter of courtesy and it also happened to be his birthday and many people had gone there. There he mentioned certain ideas and said he would like to express himself more fully. After all, Sir, officers pay courtesy calls on all kinds of people. For example all kinds of people not only come to me but they also give their suggestions and they also quite often go to officials to give their suggestions. We have never prevented this kind of thing. As far as the showing of files is concerned, it is forbidden; they are official secrets. But the hon. Member will agree that one cannot stop people from going and paying a countesy call on others. Even when Shri Bakshi was in the Reserve Bank, he happened to go to Madras for work and he called on Shri Krishnamachari there. It is a matter of courtesy, nothing else.

*** *** ***

I don't take it ill at all.** It seems to me that the arguments are rather tortuous, if I may put it that way. I have made it clear. Firstly, I did not discuss socialism with T.T.K. I said "socio-economic problems" which the hon. Member, I think, should know may have quite a different meaning, and may have nothing to do with socialism. They exist in a capitalist system or a communist system or any other system. Again, as I said, it was not as if just somebody came. He is an elderly person, who has been our colleague and for whom I have respect. If any one comes to me and says, "I would like to place my views before you," Obviously, I say, "certainly, I will hear your views." This is what I said, I get such views from all parts of the House. All Members come, and many of them give written notes. Many of them tell me about their ideas and I listen most patiently to them.

And not only do I listen, we do also try to work out whether the idea or the proposal is a feasible one from the financial or other points of view. This was the position, namely, that T.T.K. wanted to put certain ideas, and I mentioned the sort of subjects which he covered and which had nothing to do with the Budget. I think that it is very unfair, without any basis, to make allegations, to say that officials went with their files and so on, when I have said categorically that nobody went with any files, nobody went with the idea of discussing any kind of official business. But, obviously, if they go to see somebody and he puts certain ideas, a mental note is made of the ideas mentioned. The hon. Member, Shri Mishra, has asked, "Why did they ask for permission ?" In the normal course perhaps they would not have asked, but it just happened that I had a meeting with my officials. So

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* Replying to Shri Mulka Govinda Reddy who wanted to know as to why the four officers went together to meet Shri Krishnamachari; and to Shri Rajnarain who wanted to know why did they need the Prime Minister's approval.

** Replying to the points raised by Shri S.N. Mishra who *inter-alia* asked as to why the officials thought that special permission was necessary to meet Shri Krishnamachari, when their visit was a social call. He also expressed his doubts over Shri T.T. Krishnamachari's brand of socialism.

they mentioned, "Can we meet so and so ? He would like to discuss his ideas further." If I had not had this meeting, perhaps the question of permission would not have cropped up. I do not know. But they did and I certainly agreed. "Well, it is all right." The same subjects were discussed.

*** *** ***

This has been made absolutely clear*, I made this very clear, Sir, I think. There is no confusion.

*** *** ***

I have already replied to the first question.** If any body wants to give some suggestion, we should listen to them. As regards the second point relating to the impact on the share market, I have not pondered over it. The hon. Members must be knowing it better.

The third point which was not raised by him but was raised by the hon. Member Shri Mishra, was not answered by me earlier. With your permission, Sir, I would like to give a reply thereto. He had asked whether he was going to be inducted into the Cabinet. This has been responded to by Shri T.T. Krishnamachari himself and it has appeared in the newspapers too.

*** *** ***

The first thing he asked is whether I had sent any person to meet Shri T.T. Krishnamchari or talked to him on phone***. Certainly, I had talked with him on phone, but it was not related to any official work. It was about something else.

*** *** ***

It might be anything but it was certainly not connected with any official work.

Secondly, none took a file to him and thus the question of making any noting on the file does not arise at all. Shri Bakshi has neither written any note in the file nor any where else.

*** *** ***

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* Replying to Shri Loknath Misra's remarks, "there seems to be a little contradiction between the main statement made by the hon. Prime Minister and the subsequent replies given to the questions. She said that the officers went "with my approval". Subsequently she says that they went on their own on a courtesy call or a social call, whatever it is."

** Replying to Shri Rajnarain who wanted to know whether the meeting between the officers of the Finance Department and Shri T.T. Krishnamachari, which had caused panic in the share markets of Bombay and Calcutta, was held with approval of the Prime Minister.

*** Replying to Shri Niranjan Verma who wanted to know (i) whether the Prime Minister had called Shri T.T. Krishnamachari by sending someone or by ringing him up; (ii) whether persons accompanying Shri Bakshi took down any notes or carried any file with them; and (iii) whether the officers who called on Shri T.T. Krishnamachari were connected with the preparation of the Budget.

Others had not written any note, *but when this discussion took place in the other House, he was indeed asked to note down roughly all those points, which he remembered. Therefore, he just wrote the points, and not any note to assist me.

*** *** ***

I have no knowledge about it, but I can only say, and Shri Lok Nath Mishra might be knowing it, that whenever someone calls on me and put forward any suggestion, I often note down a few things. **Hence, I cannot say whether something was noted down there on the pad or not but I think that nothing had been noted. The suggestions put forward by him, such as the suggestions pertaining to rural development, needed to be looked into deeply. May be, he had noted it for his memory. As such there was nothing in it to note in the files.

The third point raised was regarding the Budget, to which I have already replied. It is not the appropriate time to consider the taxation proposals. I would like to reiterate that it was not at all discussed. Just general points were discussed. He gave some suggestions as to what type of development of villages should be made or follow-up action should be taken, which are not concerned with the Budget at all.

*** *** ***

I think the hon. Member is mistaken because whatever Shri Krishnamachari's other faults—I am not here to discuss whether he was a conservative or not; I leave that to the hon. Member—he was in favour of bank nationalisation even when he was Finance Minister.*** He had advocated it then, I also want to clarify another point. I have said it repeatedly but I do not know whether people do not like to listen or they do not hear. Nobody want to consult Shri Krishnamachari. He wished to express certain views, and we have that much courtesy and politeness in us to listen to the views of other people, including Shri Bhupesh Gupta when he comes to give a lecture either here in the House or outside the House.

---

* Replying to Shri Niranjan Verma's question, "what about others ?"

** Shri Niranjan Verma wanted to know whether the note was written before or after the discussion in the Lok Sabha.

*** Shri K.P. Subramania Menon had described Shri Krishnamachari as "an inveterate enemy of nationalisation of banks" and wanted to know about the ideas given by him in regard to the nationalisation of banks.

Earthquake in Gujarat*

Sir, we are all greatly distressed over the damage to life and property caused by the earthquake in Gujarat on Monday. My colleague, Shri D.R. Chavan has already made a statement on the subject in the House.

According to the report received from the State Government. In Broach and surrounding villages 1 man, 6 women and 16 children have lost their lives and 144 persons have been admitted to hospital, mostly with grievous injuries. Between 150 to 175 houses have either collapsed or have become unfit for further habitation and another 2000 to 2500 have been partially damaged.

The State Government rushed medical teams from Surat and Baroda, and granted immediate cash relief to the families of the affected persons. They have informed us that other relief measures are also being taken up.

We are in touch with the State Government and are awaiting further details. Yesterday, a token grant of Rs. 51,000/- from the Prime Minister's National Relief fund has been made to the State Government for immediate relief.

As my colleague Shri D.R. Chavan has said, a detailed study of the earthquake will be carried out. The head of the seismological organisation, a senior Engineer of the Central Water and Power Commission and officers of the Geological Survey are being deputed for the purpose.

We send our sympathies to the Government and people of Gujarat especially to those families who have been affected by this disaster.

* Statement regarding the Earthquake in Gujarat, *L.S. Deb.*, 20 March, 1970, cc. 277-78.

Railway Workers' Strike*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a matter of deep regret that the Opposition leaders should have thought it fit to bring in the President's name into this controversy. There is no question of our going against the President's advice or anything like that. But, you, Sir, and the hon. House are well aware of the constitutional situation. The President's advice and suggestions are always given the most earnest and most respectful consideration by the Government. But the responsibility to this House is that of the Council of Ministers. Therefore, it is very unfair to bring the President's name into any such matter. (*Interruptions*). The House is also aware of the constitutional relationship that exists under our Constitution between the President and the Council of Ministers. We should be... (*Interruptions*). If you want me to speak, then they should all sit down. Either they want me to speak or, if they want to speak, it is for you to decide.

I would request the hon. Members to read the Constitution and take legal advice on it. I am stating the position as I understand it and as we have understood it all these years since this Parliament has been in existence. It would be dangerous to set new precedents at this stage. Another point I wish to make is that on all important matters, decisions are taken by the Cabinet and not by individual Ministers.

I have neither met Mr. Qureshi nor seen or read his statement. But I have heard hon. Member, Indrajit Gupta read it out and I do not think there is any real discrepancy between the two. We have stated our stand clearly in this House that we are not for victimisation. However, not only in the case of railways but in other spheres also sometimes injustice does take place at the lower level but if our attention is drawn to such cases, we shall look into them. One case has been mentioned and certainly the Railway Minister and the Ministry should look into it. There may be some other cases in which mistakes have been made. This does not go against our general policy which is to look after the interests of the workers. In this matter also our policy has been stated by me at the time of no-confidence motion and by the Railway Minister on several occasions. There have been other occasions before and afterwards when we had stated very clearly that we do not want to indulge in any victimisation. We do not want any innocent people to suffer. The Minister has already stated that a very large number of people have already been released.

*** *** ***

* Participating in the debate on the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways), 1974-75, *L.S. Deb.*, 21 August, 1974, cc. 219–23.

You may have some different figures, but this is what our report tells us*. While the strike was on, we had the same kind of shouting from the opposite side, telling us that the strike was total. A large number of people did go on strike, but that large number was a small number in comparison with those who did not go on strike.

*** *** ***

Sir, hon. Members opposite have not helped the cause of railway workers by urging them to go on strike. Today, they are not helping them in any way by shouting and by the manner in which they are behaving in the House.

*** *** ***

Our policy is quite clear as it has been enunciated by the Railway Minister and his colleague Shri Qureshi...

*** *** ***

We are viewing with great sympathy and consideration the cases of all railway workers. If there are any cases of victimisation, I hope they will be very urgently and with great seriousness looked into—(*Interruptions*)

*** *** ***

Whatever there are**. I have to say that. You may be convinced. I am not convinced. Therefore, I have used the world 'if'. If there are any such cases, they should be looked into with great seriousness and with sympathy. We want to bring the situation back to normal as soon as possible. I fully agree with those Members who say that it is a human problem. I am very conscious of the human problem and that is our interest in it. I am sorry to say that the hon. Members opposite as well as some of their colleagues outside are constantly trying to make a political issue of it***.

---

* Replying to Shri Samar Guha who said, "No".

** Responding to a Member's question, "If there are ?"

*** A speech containing some similar points was made by the Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi, in Rajya Sabha also. (*R.S. Deb.*, 21 August, 1974, cc. 189-91.)

Elections in Gujarat*

Mr., Speaker Sir, the House is aware that over the week end, Shri Morarji Desai, one of our distinguished Members, has broken his fast.

The earlier decision to hold elections in Gujarat only after the end of the monsoon was because of the severe drought conditions existing at present in large parts of the State and was also in keeping with the accepted convention in the country that General Elections are not held at the height of summer or during the rains in order to minimise inconvenience to the people in the exercise of their franchise.

This decision was not taken lightly or with any political motivation. No question of principle or policy was involved here apart from what we thought was the best for the people of Gujarat. We did not want to do anything against their interests.

The Government of Gujarat is putting in a tremendous effort to alleviate the hardships of the drought affected areas. We genuinely felt that elections now would divert the attention of the Administration and the people from their concentration on this urgent task and necessitate the redeployment of personnel for election work.

*** *** ***

This could not be in the interest of the people of Gujarat where large numbers of people are on the move, either working on relief projects or taking their cattle to other districts. Even drinking water has to be transported over long distances.

I have never stood on prestige. However, I do feel that fasts of this nature are unjustified and constitute an irrational form of political pressure. Many friends have drawn attention to the fact that Shri Morarji Desai himself was forthright in expressing similar views in the past.

I believe a rumour was spread that we might put off elections. There was no truth in this. Our motives were being misrepresented and our anxieties misunderstood, I had clearly told Shri Morarji Desai, and it had also been stated in Parliament, that elections would be held as soon as possible after the monsoons and that the process would begin in September. If the rains ended sooner, we could have advanced the date of the elections. Thus the issue at stake was only three or four months.

*** *** ***

* Statement regarding Elections in Gujarat, *L.S. Deb.*, 15 April, 1975, cc. 325–28.

Frankly, this small time lag hardly seemed an adequate reason for such a serious step as the Fast.

However, Shri Morarji Desai did undertake his fast. Medical reports were disquieting. The merits of the case recorded into the background and the prime consideration for us became that of saving Shri Morarji Desai's life. We did not want him to die. So my colleagues and I decided to ask the Election Commission to hold elections in Gujarat around the 7th of June, thus meeting Shri Desai's main point...

*** *** ***

The exact date will, of course, be fixed by the Election Commission. The summer conditions will, no doubt, impose hardship on the people at various stages of the election process, but we hope that the people of Gujarat will appreciate the underlying reasons for holding the elections earlier.

In my correspondence with Shri Desai, two other questions also figure–the Emergency and the Maintenance of Internal Security Act.

Recent international trends have been far from reassuring. There is feverish military build-up in and around our region.

*** *** ***

The threat to our borders is not only on our land frontier but also along our extensive sea coast. The revocation of Emergency at such a time will seriously affect national security.

*** *** ***

The purpose of the Maintenance of Internal Security Act is also to strengthen the nation's hands in dealing with anti-social and anti-national elements. The objective of the Maintenance of Internal Security Act has never been to curtail any legitimate political activity.

*** *** ***

If there are apprehensions or allegations of the misuse of the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, it will naturally be our responsibility to examine such complaints in consultation with the appropriate State Governments.*

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* Responding to Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's remark, "You have put thousands of political workers in prison".

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